

and friends, declaring that he left her an untouched virgin. His health decayed some years before his death, which happened at the castle of Grone, near Halberstadt, in 1024, on the 14th of July, towards the end of the fifty-second year of his life; he having reigned twenty-two years from his election, and ten years and five months from his coronation at Rome. His body was interred in the cathedral at Bamberg, with the greatest pomp, and with the unfeigned tears of all his subjects. The great number of miracles by which God was pleased to declare his glory in heaven, procured his canonization, which was performed by Eugenius III. in 1152. His festival is kept on the day following that of his death.*

Those who by honours, dignities, riches, or talents are raised by God in the world above the level of their fellow-creatures, have a great stewardship, and a most rigorous account to give at the bar of divine justice, their very example having a most powerful influence over others. This St. Fulgentius observed, writing to Theodorus, a pious Roman senator: (1) "Though," said he, "Christ died for all men, yet the perfect conversion of the great ones of the world brings great acquisitions to the kingdom of Christ. And they who are placed in high stations must necessarily be to very many an occasion of eternal perdition or of salvation. And as they cannot go alone, so either a high degree of glory or an extraordinary punishment will be their everlasting portion."

ST. PLECHELM, B. C. APOSTLE OF GUELDERLAND

He was by birth a noble English Saxon, but born in the southern part of Scotland; for Lothian and the rest of the Lowlands as far as Edinburgh frith belonged for several ages

(1) S. Fulgent. ep. 6.

* Baronius and some others call St. Henry the first emperor of that name, because Henry I. or the Fowler, was never crowned by the Pope at Rome; without which ceremony some Italians style an emperor only king of Germany or emperor elect; though Charles V. was the last that was so crowned at Rome. St. Henry on his death-bed recommended to the princes Conrad the Salic, duke of Franconia, who was accordingly chosen emperor, was crowned at Rome in 1027, reigned with great piety and glory, and was buried in the cathedral church at Spire, which he had built near his own palace. He was succeeded by his son Henry the Black or III.

to the Northumbrian English. Having received holy orders in his own country he made a pilgrimage to Rome, whence he returned home enriched with holy relics. Some time after, in company with the holy bishop St. Wiro, and St. Otger a deacon, he passed into those parts of Lower Germany which had not then received the light of faith. Having obtained the protection of Pepin, mayor of the palace in Austrasia, he converted the country now called Guelderland, Cleves, Juliers, and several neighbouring provinces lying chiefly between the Rhine, the Wahal, and the Meuse. When he had planted the gospel there with great success he retired to St. Peter's Mount near Ruremund, but continued to make frequent missions among the remaining infidels. Prince Pepin, who though he had formerly fallen into adultery, led afterwards a penitential and Christian holy life, went every year from his castle of Herstal to confess his sins to this holy pastor after the death of St. Wiro, which the author of St. Plechelm's life relates in the following words: (1) "Pepin, the king of the French, (that is, mayor with royal authority,) had him in great veneration, and every year, in the beginning of Lent, having laid aside his purple, went from his palace barefoot to the said mount of Peter where the saint lived, and took his advice how he ought to govern his kingdom according to the holy will and law of God, and by what means he might promote the faith of Christ and every advantage of virtue. There also having made the confession of his sins to the high priest of the Lord, and received penance, he washed away with his tears the offences which through human frailty he had contracted." F. Bosch, the Bollandist, observes, this prince must have been Pepin, surnamed of Herstal, or the Fat, who though he never enjoyed the title of king, reigned in Austrasia with regal power, and with equal piety and valour. He died in 714, in the castle of Jopil on the Meuse, near Liege, which was his paternal estate, St. Pepin of Landon his grandfather being son of Carloman, the first mayor of this family, grandson of Charles count of Hesbay near Liege, the descendant of Ferreol, formerly præfectus-prætorio of the Gauls. St. Plechelm survived Pepin of Herstal seventeen years, is called by Bollandus bishop of Oldenzel and Ruremund, and died on the 15th of July, 732.

(1) N. 11, p. 69.

He was buried in our lady's chapel in the church, on the mountain of St. Peter, now called of St. Odilia, near Ruremund. His relics were honoured with many miracles. The principal portion of them is now possessed by the collegiate church of Oldenzel, in the province of Over-Yssel, part at Ruremund. His name is famous in the Belgic and other Martyrologies. His ancient life testifies that he was ordained bishop in his own country before he undertook a missionary life. Bede, in the year 731, mentions Pechthelm, who having been formerly a disciple of St. Aldhelm, in the kingdom of the West-Saxons, returning to his own country was ordained bishop to preach the gospel with more authority. He afterwards fixed his see at Candida Casa, now a parliamentary town of Galloway in Scotland, called Whitehorn. The Bollandists in several parts of their work contend this Pechthelm to have been a different person from St. Plechelm, whom Stilling demonstrates to have been at Mount St. Peter, whilst the other, somewhat elder according to Bede, was in North-Britain at Candida Casa; though Antony Pagi⁽¹⁾ and the author of *Batavia Sacra* endeavour to prove him, against F. Bosch and his colleagues, to have been the same. See his authentic life with the remarks of Bollandus and his colleagues, Julij, t. 4, p. 58, and *Batavia Sacra*, p. 50.*

(1) Critic. Hist. Chron. ad an. 734, n. 4.

* Our saint's colleague St. Wiro (in Irish Bearaidhe) is honoured on the 8th of May. By the Four Masters he is styled Abbot of Dublin; but with the Irish annalists, bishop and abbot are generally synonymous terms. He died in 650. See Ware.

St. Plechelm's other fellow-missionary, St. Otger, is honoured on the 10th of September; he is always styled deacon, by which it appears that he was never promoted to the priesthood. From his name and other circumstances it is thought he was an English-Saxon, though from the north, probably the southern parts of Scotland anciently subject to the kings of the Northumbers. Being desirous to accompany SS. Wiro and Plechelm to Rome, and in their apostolic missions into Germany, when Pepin gave the Mount of St. Peter or of St. Odilia to St. Wiro, the three saints settled there together, and ended their days in that monastery. Whether St. Otger outlived St. Plechelm is uncertain. All three were buried in the monastery of Berg, or of Mount St. Peter or St. Odilia; and their bodies remained there till, in 858, that monastery was given by King Lothaire to Hunger, bishop of Utrecht, when the greater part of these relics was translated to Utrecht. Part still remained in the church of Berg till, with the chapter of canons, it was removed to Ruremund. These relics were hid some time in the civil wars for fear of the Calvinists, but discovered in 1594, and placed again above the high