

example, if always placed before our eyes, will withhold us from being hurried away by the torrent of the world, and its pernicious maxims, and the remembrance of their heroic conflicts, and the sight of the crowns they now enjoy, will be our comfort and support. What can give us greater joy in this valley of tears than to think often on the bliss which these glorious conquerors already possess, and on the means by which they attained to it? We ourselves press close after them, and even now are not far from the same glory; for we live on the borders of it. The longest life is very short: and every moment in it may, by the least unexpected incident, engulf us suddenly in the abyss of eternity, and remove us into the society of these glorious saints. Can we desire this bliss, and not love, honour, and always bear them in mind?

#### ST. ALICE, OR ADELAIDE, EMPRESS.

THE second kingdom of Burgundy, called also of Arles, was erected by Charles the Bald, emperor and king of France, who, in 879, bestowed Burgundy, Provence, Bresse, and Dauphiné, with his title on his brother-in-law Boso, descended by the mother from Lewis Debonnair.\* Rudolph or Ralph II., king of Burgundy, was father to St. Alice, whom he left at his death, in 937, only six years old. At sixteen she was married to Lothaire, king of Italy, by whom she had a daughter named Emma, who was afterwards married to Lothaire, king of France. The death of our saint's husband, which happened about the year 949, left her a young widow, and the afflictions with which she was visited contributed perfectly to disengage her heart from the world, and make her devote herself to the practice of piety, which had been from her infancy the ruling inclination of her heart. Berengarius III., margrave of Yvrea, possessed himself of all Lombardy, and succeeded to the title of king of Italy. This prince, who had always been the declared enemy of his predecessor's family, cast Alice into prison at

\* After the death of King Ralph III., the Emperor Conrad II. annexed all Burgundy to the empire. But several provincial governors made themselves masters in their districts; namely, the counts of Savoy, Burgundy, and Provence; the daupin of Viennois, and the lord of Bresse; the first confederation of the Switzers and Grisons is said also to have been then formed.

Pavia, where she suffered the greatest hardships and indignities. She at length found means to make her escape, and fled towards Germany; but was met by the Emperor Otho I., who, at the solicitation of Pope Agapetus II., was marching at the head of an army of fifty thousand men to do her justice. He made himself master of Pavia and other places, and married Alice;\* but restored the kingdom to Berengarius, upon condition he should hold it of the empire. Berengarius soon forgot his engagements: whereupon Otho, at the earnest request of Pope John XII., sent his son Luitolph against him; and Luitolph after gaining many victories, dying, the emperor went in person into Italy, made Berengarius prisoner, and banished him into Germany, where he died at Bamberg. After this victory, Otho was crowned emperor at Rome by the pope in 963.

The good empress was not puffed up with prosperity, and made use both of her riches and power only to do good to all men, especially to protect, comfort, and relieve all that were in distress. Otho I., surnamed the Great, died in 973, having reigned as king of Germany thirty-six years, as emperor almost eleven. Alice educated her son, Otho II., with great care, and his reign was happy so long as he governed by her directions.† But not standing upon his guard against flatterers, he

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\* Otho I. son of Henry, or the Fowler, succeeded his father in 936; had by Editha, his first wife, a son, named Luitolph; and by St. Alice, his second wife, Otho II., his successor.

† St. Alice long made use of ADELBERT, first archbishop of Magdeburg, for her spiritual director and counsellor. He is by many historians ranked among the saints, and Alice and her husband had so great a share in his apostolic missions, that a short account of his life serves to illustrate their actions. Henry the Fowler, king of Germany, having re-established the abbey of St. Maximin at Triers, that house became a nursery of great prelates and saints. Among these one of the most eminent was Adelbert. In his youth, dreading that learning which only swells the heart, he always began and ended his studies by prayer, and interrupted them by long devout meditations, and by continual sighs to God. At the same time he laboured to purify his understanding, and disengage his affections from earthly things by sincere humility, and the mortification of his will and senses. Thus he became remarkably distinguished among his brethren for that sincere piety which edifies, and he appeared excellently fitted to communicate to others that spirit with which he was replenished, when he was called out of his retirement to preach the pure maxims of the gospel to others.

The Rugi or Rani about the year 960, by deputies entreated the Emperor Otho I. to procure them a bishop who might instruct them in the Christian faith. This fierce nation inhabited part of Pomerania between

suffered his heart to be debauched by evil counsellors. After the death of his first wife, who was daughter to the marquis of Austria, he married Theophania, a Grecian princess, and so far forgot his duty to his good mother as to banish her from

the rivers Oder and Wipper, (where the city Rugenwald in Brandenburg still bears their name,) and the isle of Rugen in the Baltic. Helmoldus, in his accurate chronicle of the Slavi, (l. 1, c. 2,) informs us that they were a savage people, and the only tribe of the Slavi or Slavonians which had a king; that they had also a high priest, whose sway was very great in the neighbouring countries: they pretended to a familiar intercourse with the gods, or rather with the devils, in a famous temple in the isle of Rugen, in which the people lodged their treasures, and to which the neighbouring nations sent frequently rich presents. Neither St. Ansharius nor St. Rembertus had preached to this barbarous nation. But certain monks of New-Corbie, in the reign of Lewis le Debonnaire, undertook a mission among them, and with the hazard of their lives converted many to the Christian faith in the various provinces of the Slavi, and the whole island of Rugen, in which they built an oratory in honour of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and in memory of St. Vitus the patron of New-Corbie. This island had been the seat of error, and the metropolis of idolatry in that part of the world; and the savage inhabitants, soon after their conversion, apostatized again from the faith; and added to former superstitions a new monstrous extravagance by honouring St. Vitus as the chief of all their gods, erecting to him a stately temple and an idol with sacrifices, glorying only in his name, and suffering no merchant to come among them, nor any one to buy or sell any thing who did not first give some offering for the sacrifices or temple of their god, whom corruptly for St. Vite, they called Swantewith. "Thus whom we confess a martyr and servant of Christ they adore as God," says Helmoldus, (l. 1, c. 6,) "a creature for the Creator: nor is there any nation under the sun that so much abhors Christians, especially Christian priests."—Out of hypocrisy, as appeared by the event, they petitioned for preachers. Otho I., emperor of Germany, received their messengers with joy, and chose first Libutius, a monk of St. Alban's at Mentz, for their bishop; but he dying before he set out, Adelbert was pitched upon, and ordained bishop of the Rugi. Otho munificently furnished him with all things necessary, and the new bishop entered the country with a select number of fellow-preachers. But the hearts of the people were hardened against the truth: and several of the missionaries being massacred by them, the rest, with the bishop, with great difficulty, escaped out of their hands, and, despairing of success, returned to their monasteries. This mission happened in the year 961.

Adelbert was made abbot of Wurtzburgh in 966, and in 970, first archbishop of Magdeburg, which see was raised to the dignity of Metropolitan of the Slavi, by Pope John XIII. at the request of Otho I., who seeing many provinces of the Slavi converted to the faith, procured the establishment of this church with five suffragans under it, namely of Merseburg, Cicen, Misna, Posna or Brandenburg, and Havelberg, all situated in the territory of the Slavi. That great prince, the conqueror of Bohemia and of all the northern nations of Germany, built, or rather exceedingly enlarged and enobled the city of Magdeburg, at the desire of his first queen, Editha, daughter of King Edmund of England. She was buried in this city, as was afterwards the emperor himself, who died

court. Her tears for his irregularities were not shed in vain. Misfortunes opened his eyes; he recalled her, and, with the most dutiful deference, reformed the abuses of the government by her counsels. The young emperor, having been defeated by the Greeks in Calabria, died of a dysentery at Rome in 983, after he had reigned nine years. His imperious widow, Theophania, who became regent for her son, Otho III., made it a point of honour to insult her pious mother-in-law; but Alice made no other return for all the ill treatment she received

there in the year 973. His second wife, St. Alice, who survived him, passed here the greater part of her time during her widowhood, under the direction of the good archbishop. By his prudent care were many churches erected in all those parts, and supplied with able pastors for the instruction and spiritual assistance of the converted nations. He settled in most excellent order the chapter of his metropolitical church, which the aforesaid emperor had munificently founded; and he converted to the faith great numbers of the Slavi, whom he found still bewildered in the shades of infidelity. He enriched the church of Magdeburg with the relics of St. Maurice, and many other martyrs, was endued with the spirit of prophecy, and discharged all the duties of an apostle during the twelve years which he governed his church. He was taken ill whilst he was performing the visitation of the diocese of Merseburg, and having said mass at Messeburch, he found himself so weak that he laid himself down on a carpet, received there the last rites of the church, and amidst the prayers of the clergy happily departed to our Lord, on the 20th day of June, 982. He is usually styled saint by agiographers, who give his life on the 20th of June: but his name is not found in any known calendars of the church. Papebroke and Baillet think he was honoured among the saints at Magdeburg before the change of religion, by which all former monuments of saints there were abolished; insomuch that none had been preserved of the veneration of St. Norbert, had it not been for the care which was taken by his Order. Nevertheless, Joseph Assemani thinks positive proofs ought to be produced, before his name be placed in the calendars. On his life see Lambert of Shafnaburg, l. De rebus gestis Germanorum, an. 960. Ditmarus, Helmoldus, two chronicles of Magdeburg, quoted by Mabillon, sæc. 5, Ben. p. 575, and Jos. Assemani, in Calend. De Origin. Slavorum, t. 1, c. 3, p. 264, et seq.

N. B.—Baronius, ad an. 959. Pagi, ib. Mabillon, sæc. 5, Ben. p. 573, and the Bollandists by mistake confound the Rugi with the Russi, and falsely imagine that St. Adelbert preached to the Russians and Muscovites, on whom see St. Bruno or Boniface, June 19th, and SS. Romanus and David, July 24.

The Rugi continued in their apostacy till, in 1168, Waldemar, king of Denmark, with the assistance of the princes of Pomerania, and especially the Obotritæ, subdued this whole nation, destroyed their famous temple, and caused their great idol Swantewith to be hewn to pieces and burnt. Absolon bishop of Roskilde, and Berno bishop of Meckelburg, who accompanied him, erected twelve churches in the country of these Slavi, which remained a long time tributary to Denmark. See Helmold, l. 2, c. 12, and Jos. Assemani, in Calend. Univ. t. 1, p. 258.

at her hands but that of meekness and patience. The young empress being snatched away by a sudden death, she was obliged to take upon her the regency. On this occasion it appeared how perfectly she was dead to herself. Power she looked upon merely as a burden and most difficult stewardship ; but she applied herself to public affairs with indefatigable care. She showed herself so much a stranger to all resentment, as to load with benefactions those courtiers who had formerly given her most to suffer. Her attention to the public concerns never made her neglect the exercises of mortification and devotion. At set hours she retired to her oratory, there to seek by humble prayer the direction and light of heaven in her counsels, and to weep before God for those sins of the people which it was not in her power to remedy. In correcting others she felt in her own breast the confusion and trouble which her correction must give them ; hence she forgot nothing which could soften it. Thus, by gaining their confidence and affection, she easily conducted them to virtue. Her own household appeared as regular as the most edifying monastery. She filled all the provinces which had the happiness to share in her protection, but especially the city of Magdeburg, with religious houses, and other monuments of charity and piety, and she zealously promoted the conversion of the Rugi and other infidels. In the last year of her life she took a journey into the kingdom of Burgundy to reconcile the subjects of that realm to King Ralph, her nephew, and died on the road, at Salces, in Alsace, in the year 999. Her name is honoured in the calendars of several churches in Germany, though not in the Roman. A portion of her relics is kept in a costly shrine in the Treasury of Relics at Hanover, and is mentioned in the *Lipsanographia* of the electoral palace at Brunswick-Lunenbourg, printed in 1713. See the life of St. Alice, written by St. Odilo, with histories of her miracles, published by Leibnitz, *Collectio Scriptorum Brunswicensium*, t. 2, p. 262.

The Irish commemorate on this day St. BEANUS, a bishop in Leinster. Colgan, MSS.