

JANUARY XXVII.

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM,

ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE, AND DOCTOR OF THE
CHURCH.

From Socrates, Theodoret, and other historians: as also from the saint's works; and his life, written by way of dialogue, with great fidelity, by his friend and strenuous advocate Palladius, a holy bishop, but a distinct person from Palladius the bishop of Helenopolis, and author of the *Lausiac history*, who was then young, and is evidently distinguished by this writer in many places, as Tillemont, Montfaucon, and Stilling, show against Baillet and others; though also Palladius, bishop of Helenopolis, exerted himself in defence of St. Chrysostom. Palladius, author of the *Dialogue on the Life of St. Chrysostom*, was never accused of Origenism except by those who, at least in the proofs alleged for this charge, confounded him with the bishop of Helenopolis. F. Stilling clears also the latter from the charge of Origenism, and answers the arguments produced by Baronius against him. *Comm. Hist. s. 1. p. 404.* The later Greek panegyrists, George, patriarch of Alexandria, in 620, the Emperor Leo the Wise, in 890, &c. deserve very little notice. See the life of our saint compiled by Dom Montfaucon. *Op. T. 13.* And lastly the accurate commentary on his life given by F. Stilling the Bollandist, on the 14th of September, from p. 401 to 709, T. 4.

A.D. 407.

HIS incomparable doctor, on account of the fluency and sweetness of his eloquence, obtained soon after his death the surname of Chrysostom or Golden Mouth, which we find given him by St. Ephrem of Antioch, Theodoret, and Cassiodorus. But his tender piety, and his undaunted courage and zeal in the cause of virtue, are titles far more glorious, by which he holds an eminent place among the greatest pastors and saints of the church. About the year 344, according to F. Stilling, Antioch, the capital city of the East, was ennobled by his illustrious birth. He had one elder sister, and was the only son and heir of Secundus, master of the horse, that is, chief commander of the imperial troops in Syria. His mother Anthusa, left a widow at twenty years of age, continued such the remainder of her life, dividing her time between the care of her family and the exercises of devotion. Her example in this respect made such an impression on our saint's master, a celebrated pagan sophist, that he could

Alan Mac Donald of Moydart, whose ancestors were once kings of these islands; Barry, under Mac Neil; Canny, and Egg, and some others. In many others there are long since no Catholics, as in Lewis, North-Vist, Harries, St. Kilda, &c. See the latest edition of the *Present State of England*, and Bishop Leslie's nephew, in his MS. account, &c.

not forbear crying out : " What wonderful women have the Christians !" (1) She managed the estate of her children with great prudence and frugality, knowing this to be part of her duty to God, but she was sensible that their spiritual instruction in virtue was of infinitely greater importance. From their cradle she instilled into them the most perfect maxims of piety, and contempt of the world. The ancient Romans dreaded nothing more in the education of youth, than their being ill-taught the first principles of the sciences ; it being more difficult to unlearn the errors then imbibed, than to begin on a mere *tabula rasa*, or blank paper. Wherefore Anthusa provided her son the ablest masters in every branch of literature, which the empire at that time afforded. Eloquence was esteemed the highest accomplishment, especially among the nobility, and was the surest means of raising men to the first dignities in the state. John studied that art under Libanius, the most famous orator of that age ; and such was his proficiency, that even in his youth he excelled his masters. Libanius being asked by his pagan friends on his death-bed, about the year 390, who should succeed him in his school : " John," said he, " had not the Christians stolen him from us." (2) Our saint was then priest. Whilst he was only a scholar, that sophist one day read to an assembly of orators a declamation composed by him, and it was received with unusual tokens of admiration and applause. Libanius pronounced the young orator happy, " as were also the emperors," he said, " who reigned at a time when the world was possessed of so great a treasure." (3) The progress of the young scholar in Philosophy, under Andragatius, was no less rapid and surprising ; his genius shone in every disputation. All this time his principal care was to study Christ, and to learn his spirit. He laid a solid foundation of virtue, by perfect humility, self-denial, and a complete victory over himself. Though naturally hot and inclined to anger, he had extinguished all emotions of passion in his breast. (4) His modesty, meekness, tender charity, and singular discretion, rendered him the delight of all he conversed with.

The first dignities of the empire were open to John. But his principal desire was to dedicate himself to God, without reserve,

(1) S. Chrys. ad Vid. jun. T. 1. p. 340.

(2) Sozom. l. 8. c. 22.

(3) Liban. ep. ad Joan. apud S. Isidor. Pelus. l. 2. ep. 42.

(4) L. 3. de Sacerd. c. 14. p. 390.

in holy solitude. However, not being yet twenty years of age, he for some time pleaded at the bar. In that employment he was drawn by company into the diversions of the world, and sometimes assisted at the entertainments of the stage. His virtue was in imminent danger of splitting against that fatal rock, when God opened his eyes. He was struck with horror at the sight of the precipice upon the brink of which he stood; and not content to flee from it himself, he never ceased to bewail his blindness, and took every occasion to caution the faithful against that lurking place of hellish sirens, but more particularly in his vehement sermons against the stage. Alarmed at the danger he had narrowly escaped, full of gratitude to God his deliverer, and to prevent the like danger for the time to come, he was determined to carry his resolution of renouncing the world into immediate execution. He began by the change of his garb, to rid himself the more easily of the importunities of friends: for a penitential habit is not only a means for preserving a spirit of mortification and humility, but is also a public sign and declaration to the world, that a person has turned his back on its vanities, and is engaged in an irreconcilable war against them. His clothing was a coarse gray coat; he watched much, fasted every day, and spent the greater part of his time in prayer and meditation on the holy scriptures: his bed was no other than the hard floor. In subduing his passions, he found none of so difficult a conquest as vain-glory; (1) this enemy he disarmed by embracing every kind of public humiliation. The clamours of his old friends and admirers, who were incensed at his leaving them, and pursued him with their invectives and censures, were as arrows shot at random. John took no manner of notice of them: he rejoiced in contempt, and despised the frowns of a world whose flatteries he dreaded: Christ crucified was the only object of his heart, and nothing could make him look back after he had put his hand to the plough. His progress in virtue was answerable to his zealous endeavours.

St. Meletius, bishop of Antioch, called the young ascetic to the service of the church, gave him suitable instructions, during three years, in his own palace, and ordained him Reader. John had learned the art of silence, in his retirement, with far greater application than he had before studied that of speaking. This he discovered when he appeared again in the world, though no

(1) L. 3. de Sacerd. c. 14.

man ever possessed a greater fluency of speech, or a more ready and enchanting eloquence, joined with the most solid judgment and a rich fund of knowledge and good sense; yet in company he observed a modest silence, and regarded talkativeness as an enemy to the interior recollection of the heart, as a source of many sins and indiscretions, and as a mark of vanity and self-conceit. He heard the words of the wise with the humble docility of a scholar, and he bore the impertinence, trifles, and blunders of fools in discourse, not to interrupt the attention of his soul to God, or to make an ostentatious show of his eloquence or science: yet with spiritual persons he conversed freely on heavenly things, especially with a pious friend named Basil, one of the same age and inclinations with himself, who had been his most beloved school-fellow, and who forsook the world to embrace a monastic life, a little before our saint. After three years, he left the bishop's house to satisfy the importunities of his mother, but continued the same manner of life in her house, during the space of two years. He still saw frequently his friend Basil, and he prevailed on two of his school-fellows under Libanius to embrace an ascetic life, Theodorus, afterwards bishop of Mopsuestia, and Maximus, bishop of Seleucia. The former returned in a short time to the bar, and fell in love with a young lady called Hermione. John lamented his fall with bitter tears before God, and brought him back to his holy institute by two tender and pathetic exhortations to penance, "which breath an eloquence above the power of what seems merely human," says Sozomen. Not long after, hearing that the bishops of the province were assembled at Antioch, and deliberating to raise him and Basil to the episcopal dignity, he privately withdrew, and lay hidden till the vacant sees were filled. Basil was made bishop of Raphanæa near Antioch; and had no other resource in his grief for his promotion, but in tears and complaints against his friend who had betrayed him into so perilous a charge. John being then twenty-six years old, wrote to him in his own justification six incomparable books, *Of the Priesthood*.

Four years after, in 374, he retired into the mountains near Antioch, among certain holy anchorets who peopled them, and whose manner of life is thus described by our saint.⁽¹⁾ They devoted all the morning to prayer, pious reading, and meditating

(1) Hom. 72. (ol. 73.) & 68. (ol. 69.) in Matt. Hom. 14. in 1 Tim. T. 11. p. 628. 630. l. 3. contra vitup. vitæ Mon. c. 14.

on the holy scriptures. Their food was bread with a little salt; some added oil, and those who were very weak, a few herbs or pulse; no one ever eat before sun-set. After the refection it was allowed to converse with one another, but only on heavenly things. They always closed their night prayers, with the remembrance of the last judgment, to excite themselves to a constant watchfulness and preparation; which practice St. Chrysostom earnestly recommends to all Christians with the evening examination.(1) These monks had no other bed than a mat spread on the bare ground. Their garments were made of the rough hair of goats or camels, or of old skins, and such as the poorest beggars would not wear, though some of them were of the richest families, and had been tenderly brought up. They wore no shoes; no one possessed any thing as his own; even their poor necessities were all in common. They inherited their estates only to distribute them among the poor; and on them, and in hospitality to strangers, they bestowed all the spare profits of their work. They all used the same food, wore a uniform habit, and by charity were all of one heart. The cold words mine and thine, the baneful source of law-suits and animosities among men, were banished from their cells. They rose at the first crowing of the cock, that is, at midnight, being called up by the superior; and after the morning hymns and psalms, that is, matins and lauds, all remained in their private cells, where they read the holy scriptures, and some copied books. All met in the church at the canonical hours of tierce, sext, none, and vespers, but returned to their cells, none being allowed to speak, to jest, or to be one moment idle. The time which others spend at table, or in diversions, they employed in honouring God; even their meal took up very little time, and after a short sleep, (according to the custom of hot countries,) they resumed their exercises, conversing not with men, but with God, with the prophets and apostles in their writings and pious meditation; and spiritual things were the only subjects of their entertainment. For corporal exercise they employed themselves in some mean manual labour, such as entertained them in humility, and could not inspire vanity or pride: they made baskets, tilled and watered the earth, hewed wood, attended the kitchen, washed the feet of all strangers, and waited on them without distinction whether they were rich or poor. The saint adds, that anger, jealousy, envy,

(2) Lib. de Compunct. p. 132.

grief, and anxiety for worldly goods and concerns, were unknown in these poor cells; and he assures us, that the constant peace, joy, and pleasure which reigned in them, were as different from the bitterness and tumultuous scenes of the most brilliant worldly felicity, as the security and calmness of the most agreeable harbour are, from the dangers and agitation of the most tempestuous ocean. Such was the rule of these cenobites, or monks who lived in community. There were also hermits on the same mountains who lay on ashes, wore sack-cloth, and shut themselves up in frightful caverns, practising more extraordinary austerities. Our saint was at first apprehensive that he should find it an insupportable difficulty to live without fresh bread, use the same stinking oil for his food and for his lamp, and inure his body to hard labour under such great austerities.⁽¹⁾ But by courageously despising his apprehension, in consequence of a resolution to spare nothing by which he might learn perfectly to die to himself, he found the difficulty entirely to vanish in the execution. Experience shows that in such undertakings, the imagination is alarmed not so much by realities as phantoms, which vanish before a courageous heart which can look them in the face with contempt. Abbot Rancé, the reformer of la Trappe, found more difficulty in the thought of rising without a fire in winter, in the beginning of his conversion, than he did in the greatest severities which he afterwards practised. St. Chrysostom passed four years under the conduct of a veteran Syrian monk, and afterwards two years in a cave as a hermit. The dampness of this abode brought on him a dangerous distemper, and for the recovery of his health he was obliged to return into the city. By this means he was restored to the service of the church in 381, for the benefit of innumerable souls. He was ordained deacon by St. Meletius that very year, and priest by Flavian in 386, who at the same time constituted him his vicar and preacher, our saint being then in the forty-third year of his age.* He

(1) Lib. 1. de Compunct. &c.

* Flavian I. was a native of Antioch, of honourable extraction, and possessed of a plentiful estate, which he employed in the service of the church and relief of the poor. He was remarkably grave and serious, and began early to subdue his flesh by austerities and abstinence, in which he remitted nothing even in his old age. Thus was his heart prepared to receive and cherish the seeds of divine grace, the daily increase of which rendered him so conspicuous in the world, and of such advantage to the church. The Arians being at that time masters of the church of Antioch,

discharged all the duties of that arduous station during twelve years, being the hand and the eye of his bishop, and his mouth to his flock. The instruction and care of the poor he regarded as his first obligation; this he always made his favourite employment and his delight. He never ceased in his sermons to recommend their cause and the precept of almsdeeds to the people. Antioch, he supposes, contained at that time one hundred thousand Christian souls; all these he fed with the word of God, preaching several days in the week, and frequently several times on the same day. He confounded the Jews and pagans, also the Anomæans, and other heretics. He abolished the most inveterate abuses, repressed vice, and changed the whole

Flavian and his associate Diodorus, afterwards bishop of Tarsus, equally distinguished by their birth, fortune, learning, and virtue, were the great supports of the flock of St. Eustathius had been forced to abandon. In 348, they undertook the defence of the Catholic faith against Leontius, the Arian bishop, who made use of all his craft and authority to establish Arianism in that city; one of whose chief expedients was to promote none to holy orders but Arians. The scarcity of Catholic pastors, on this account, called for all their zeal and charity in behalf of the abandoned flock. The Arians being in possession of the churches in the city, these two zealous laymen assembled them without the walls, at the tombs of the martyrs, for the exercise of religious duties. They introduced among them the manner of singing psalms alternately, and of concluding each psalm with *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was, &c.*, which pious custom was soon after spread over all the eastern and western churches. Theodoret (l. 2. c. 19.) says, that Flavian and Diodorus were the first who directed the psalms to be sung in this manner by two choirs: though Socrates (l. 6. c. 8.) attributes its institution to St. Ignatius the martyr; who having, as he there relates, heard angels in a vision singing the divine praises alternately, instituted that manner of singing in the church of Antioch; but this might have been disused. Pliny's famous letter to Trajan shows, that singing was then in use among the Christians in Bithynia; and it appears from Philo, that the Therapeuts did the same before that time. Leontius stood so much in awe of Flavian and Diodorus while they were only laymen, that, in compliance with their demands, he deposed Aëtius, that most impious and barefaced blasphemous of all the Arians, from the rank of deacon.

St. Meletius, on his being promoted to the see of Antioch, about the year 361, raised them both to the priesthood, and they took care of that church, as his delegates, during his banishment by Constantius. Thus they continued together their zealous labours till Diodorus was made bishop of Tarsus. In 381, Saint Meletius took Flavian with him to the general council which was assembled at Constantinople; but dying in that Capital, Flavian was chosen to succeed him. His life was a perfect copy of the eminent episcopal virtues, and especially of the meekness, the candour, and affability of his worthy predecessor.

Unhappily the schism, which for a long time had divided the church of Antioch, was not yet extinguished. The occasion was this: after the death of St. Eustathius, they could not agree in the choice of his successor: those who were most attached to this holy prelate, with Saint Athanasius and the West, followed Paulinus: the Apollinarists declared for Vitalis: and the

face of that great city. It seemed as if nothing could withstand the united power of his eloquence, zeal, and piety.

Theodosius I. finding himself obliged to levy a new tax on his subjects, on occasion of his war with Maximus, who had usurped the Western empire in 387, the populace of Antioch, provoked at the demand, mutinied, and discharged their rage on the emperor's statue, those of his father, his two sons, and his late consort Flavilla; dragged them with ropes through the streets, and then broke them to pieces. The magistrates durst not oppose the rabble in their excesses. But as soon as their fury was over, and that they began to reflect on what they had been guilty of, and the natural consequences of their extravagances,

greater body of the orthodox of Antioch, with Flavian, Diodorus, and all the East, adhered to St. Meletius, who, as we have seen already, was succeeded by Flavian. Paulinus, bishop of that part of the Catholics called Eustathians, from their attachment to that prelate, though long since dead, still disputed that see with Flavian: but dying in 383, the schism of Antioch must have ended, had not his abettors kept open the breach by choosing Evagrius in his room; though it does not appear that he had one bishop in communion with him, Egypt and the West being now neuter, and the East all holding communion with Flavian. Evagrius dying in 395, the Eustathians, though now without a pastor, still continued their separate meetings, and kept up the schism several years longer. St. Chrysostom being raised to the see of Constantinople, in 398, laboured hourly to abolish this fatal schism, which was brought about soon after by commissioners constituted for this purpose by the West, Egypt, and all the other parties concerned, and the Eustathians received Flavian as their lawful bishop. In the year 404, when Saint Chrysostom was banished, Flavian testified his indignation against so unjust a proceeding, and wrote upon that subject to the clergy of Constantinople. But he did not live to be witness of all the sufferings his dear friend was to meet with, dying about three years before him, in 404. The general council of Chalcedon calls him blessed, (Conc. t. 4. p. 840.) and Theodoret (l. 5. c. 232.) gives him the titles of the great, the admirable saint. St. Chrysostom is lavish in his praises of him. Flavian's sermons and other writings are all lost, except his discourse to Theodosius, preserved by St. Chrysostom. No church or Martyrology, whether among the Greeks or Latins, ever placed Flavian I. of Antioch in the catalogue of the saints. Whence Chatelain, in his notes, speaking of St. Meletius, February the 12th, p. 630; and on St. Flavian of Constantinople, February the 17th, p. 685, expresses his surprise at the boldness of Baillet and some others, who, without regard to the decrees of Urban VIII. presumed to do it of their own private authority, and without any reason, have assigned for his feast the 21st of February. Chatelain, in his additions to his Universal Martyrology, p. 711, names him with the epithet of venerable only, on the 26th of September. He is only spoken of here, to answer our design of giving in the notes some account of the most eminent fathers of the church who have never been ranked among the saints. On Saint Flavian II. of Antioch, banished by the emperor Anastasius with St. Elias of Jerusalem, for their zeal in defending the council of Chalcedon against the Eutychians, see July the 4th, on which these two confessors are commemorated in the Roman Martyrology.

they were all seized with such terror and consternation, that many abandoned the city, others absconded, and scarcely any durst appear publicly in the streets. The magistrates in the mean time were filling the prisons with citizens, in order to their trials, on account of their respective share in the combustion. Their fears were heightened on the arrival of two officers despatched from Constantinople to execute the emperor's orders with regard to the punishment of the rioters. The reports which were spread abroad on this occasion imported, that the emperor would cause the guilty to be burned alive, would confiscate their estates, and level the city with the ground. The consternation alone was a greater torment than the execution itself could have been. Flavian, notwithstanding his very advanced age, and though his sister was dying when he left her, set out without delay in a very severe season of the year, to implore the emperor's clemency in favour of his flock. Being come to the palace, and admitted into the emperor's presence, he no sooner perceived that prince but he stopped at a distance, holding down his head, covering his face, and speaking only by his tears, as though himself had been guilty. Thus he remained for some time. The emperor seeing him in this condition, carrying as it were the weight of the public guilt in his breast, instead of employing harsh reproaches, as Flavian might naturally have expected, summed up the many favours he had conferred on that city, and said at the conclusion of each article: "Is this the acknowledgment I had reason to expect? Is this their return for my love? What cause of complaint had they against me? Had I ever injured them? But granting that I had, what can they allege for extending their insolence even to the dead? Had they received any wrong from them? Why were they to be insulted too? What tenderness have I not shown on all occasions for their city? Is it not notorious that I have given it the preference in my love and esteem to all others, even to that which gave me birth? Did not I always express a longing desire to see it, and that it gave me the highest satisfaction to think I should soon be in a condition of taking a journey for this purpose?"

Then the holy bishop, being unable to bear such stinging reproaches or vindicate their conduct, made answer: "We acknowledge, Sir, that you have on all occasions favoured us with the greatest demonstrations of your singular affection; and this it is that enhances both our crime and our grief, that we

should have carried our ingratitude to such a pitch as to have offended our best friend and greatest benefactor: hence whatever punishment you may inflict upon us, it will still fall short of what we deserve. But alas! the evil we have done ourselves is worse than innumerable deaths: for what can be more afflicting than to live, in the judgment of all mankind, guilty of the blackest ingratitude, and to see ourselves deprived of your sweet and gracious protection, which was our bulwark? We dare not look any man in the face; no, not the sun itself. But as great as our misery is, it is not irremediable; for it is in your power to remove it. Great affronts among private men have often been the occasion of great charity. When the devil's envy had destroyed man, God's mercy restored him. That wicked spirit, jealous of our city's happiness, has plunged her into this abyss of evils, out of which you alone can rescue her. It is your affection, I dare say it, which has brought them upon us, by exciting the jealousy of the wicked spirits against us. But like God himself, you may draw infinite good out of the evil which they intended us. If you spare us, you are revenged on them.

"Your clemency on this occasion will be more honourable to you than your most celebrated victories. It will adorn your head with a far brighter diadem than that which you wear, as it will be the fruit only of your own virtue. Your statues have been thrown down: if you pardon this insult, you will raise yourself others, not of marble or brass, which time destroys, but such as will exist eternally in the hearts of all those who will hear of this action. Your predecessor, Constantine the Great, when importuned by his courtiers to exert his vengeance on some seditious people who had disfigured his statues by throwing stones at them, did nothing more than stroke his face with his hand, and told them smiling, that he did not feel himself hurt. This his saying is yet in the mouths of all men, and is a more illustrious trophy to his memory than all the cities which he built, or all the barbarous nations which he subdued. Remember your own memorable saying, when you ordered the prisons to be opened, and the criminals to be pardoned at the feast of Easter: 'Would to God I were able in the same manner to open the graves, and restore the dead to life!' That time is now come. Here is a city whose inhabitants are already dead; and is, as it were, at the gates of its sepulchre. Raise it then, as it is in your power to do, without cost or labour. A word will suffice.

Suffer it by your clemency to be still named among the living cities. It will then owe more to you than to its very founder. He built it small, you will raise it great and populous. To have preserved it from being destroyed by barbarians would not have been so great an exploit, as to spare it on such an occasion as now offers.

“Neither is the preservation of an illustrious city the only thing to be considered; your own glory, and, above all, the honour of the Christian religion are highly interested in this affair. The Jews and pagans, all barbarous nations, nay, the whole world, have their eyes fixed on you at this critical juncture; all are waiting for the judgment you will pronounce. If it be favourable, they will be filled with admiration, and will agree to praise and worship that God, who checks the anger of those who acknowledge no master upon earth, and who can transform men into angels; they will embrace that religion which teaches such sublime morality. Listen not to those who will object that your clemency on this occasion may be attended with, and give encouragement to, the like disorders in other cities. That could only happen, if you spared for want of a power to chastise: but whereas you do not divest yourself by such an act of clemency of this power, and as by it you endear and rivet yourself the more in the affections of your subjects, this, instead of encouraging such insults and disorders, will rather the more effectually prevent them. Neither immense sums of money, nor innumerable armies could ever have gained you so much the hearts of your subjects and their prayers for your person and empire, as will this single action. And if you stand fair for being such a gainer from men, what rewards may you not reasonably expect from God? It is easy for a master to punish, but rare and difficult to pardon.

“It will be extremely glorious to you to have granted this pardon at the request of a minister of the Lord, and it will convince the world of your piety, in that you overlooked the unworthiness of his person, and respected only the power and authority of that master who sent him. For though deputed immediately by the inhabitants of Antioch to deprecate your just displeasure on this occasion, it is not only in their name that I appear in this place, for I am come from the sovereign Lord of men and angels to declare to you in his name, that if you pardon men their faults, he will forgive you your sins. Call to mind

then that dreadful day on which we shall all be summoned to give in an account of all our actions. Reflect on your having it now in your power, without pain or labour, to efface your sins, and to find mercy at that terrible tribunal. You are about to pronounce your own sentence. Other ambassadors bring gold, silver, and other like presents, but as for me, I offer nothing but the law of God, and entreat you to imitate his example on the cross." He concluded his harangue by assuring the emperor that if he refused to pardon the city, he would never more return to it, nor look upon that city as his country, which a prince of his humane disposition could not prevail upon himself to pardon.

This discourse had its desired effect on the emperor, who with much difficulty suppressed his tears while the bishop spoke, whom he answered in these few words: "If Jesus Christ, the Lord of all things, vouchsafed to pardon and pray for those very men that crucified him, ought I to hesitate to pardon them who have offended me? I, who am but a mortal man like them, and a servant of the same master." The patriarch, overjoyed at his success, prostrated himself at the emperor's feet, wishing him a reward for such an action suitable to its merit. And whereas the prelate made an offer of passing the feast of Easter with the emperor at Constantinople, he, to testify how sincerely he was reconciled to the city of Antioch, urged his immediate return, saying: "Go, Father, delay not a moment the consolation your people will receive at your return, by communicating to them the assurance of the pardon I grant them; I know they must be in great affliction." The bishop set out accordingly; but, to delay as little as possible the joy of the citizens, he despatched a courier before him with the emperor's letter of pardon, which produced a comfortable change in the face of affairs. The bishop himself arrived time enough before Easter to keep that solemnity with his people. The joy and triumph of that city could not be greater; it is elegantly described by St. Chrysostom, extolling above all things the humility and modesty of Flavian, who attributed the whole change of Theodosius's mind, and all the glory of the action to God alone. The discourse which Flavian addressed to the emperor, except the introduction, had been composed by St. Chrysostom, who recited it to the people to comfort them, and ceased not strongly to exhort them to penance, and the fervent exercise of good works, during the whole time of their bishop's absence.(1) After this storm our saint continued his labours

(1) St. Chrys. Hom. 21. ad Pap. Antioch. seu de Statuis. T, 2.

with unwearied zeal, and was the honour, the delight, and the darling not of Antioch only, but of all the East, and his reputation spread itself over the whole empire.(1) But God was pleased to call him to glorify his name on a new theatre, where he prepared for his virtue other trials, and other crowns.

St. Chrysostom had been five years deacon, and twelve years priest, when Nectarius, bishop of Constantinople, dying in 397, the emperor Artadius, at the suggestion of Eutropius the eunuch, his chamberlain, resolved to procure the election of our saint to the patriarchate of that city. He therefore despatched a secret order to the Count of the East, enjoining him to send John to Constantinople, but by some stratagem; lest his intended removal, if known at Antioch, should cause a sedition, and be rendered impracticable. The Count repaired to Antioch, and desiring the saint to accompany him out of the city to the tombs of the martyrs, on the pretence of devotion, he there delivered him into the hands of an officer sent on purpose, who, taking him into his chariot, conveyed him with all possible speed to the imperial city. Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, a man of a proud and turbulent spirit, was come thither to recommend a creature of his own to that dignity. He endeavoured by illegal practices secretly to traverse the canonical promotion of our saint; but was detected, and threatened to be accused in a synod. Whereupon he was glad to desist from his intrigues, and thus John was consecrated by him on the 26th of February, in 398.(2) In regulating his own conduct and his domestic concerns, he retrenched all the great expenses which his predecessors had entailed on their dignity, which he looked upon as superfluous, and an excessive prodigality, and these sums he applied to the relief of the poor, especially of the sick. For this purpose he erected and maintained numerous hospitals, under the government of holy and charitable priests, and was very careful that all the servants and attendants were persons of great virtue, tenderness, compassion, and prudence. His own family being settled in good order, the next thing he took in hand after his promotion was the reformation of his clergy. This he forwarded by zealous exhortations and proper rules for their conduct, tending both to their sanctification and exemplarity. And to give these his endeavours their due force, he lived an exact model of what he inculcated to others: but his zeal exasperated the tepid part of that order, and raised a storm against himself. The immodesty

(1) Sozom. l. 8. c. 2, &c. (2) Socrat. c. 2. See Stilling, s. 35. p. 511.

of women in their dress in that gay capital, excited in him sentiments of the most just abhorrence and indignation. Some young ladies seemed to have forgotten that clothing is the covering of the ignominy of sin, and ought to be an instrument of penance, and a motive of confusion and tears, not of vanity. But the exhortations of St. Chrysostom moved many to despise and lay aside the use of purple, silks, and jewels. It was a far more intolerable scandal that some neglected to cover their necks, or used such thin veils as served only to invite the eyes of others more boldly. Our saint represented to such persons that they were in some respects worse than public prostitutes: for these hide their baits at home only for the wicked: "but you," said he, "carry your snare every where, and spread your nets publicly in all places. You allege, that you never invited others to sin. You did not by your tongue, but you have done it by your dress and deportment more effectually than you could by your voice: when you have made another to sin in his heart, how can you be innocent? You sharpened and drew the sword: you gave the thrust by which the soul is wounded.(1) Tell me whom does the world condemn? whom do judges punish? Those who drink the poison, or those who prepare and give the fatal draught? You have mingled the execrable cup; you have administered the potion of death; you are so much more criminal than poisoners, as the death which you cause is the more terrible; for you murder not the body, but the soul. Nor do you do this to enemies; nor compelled by necessity, nor provoked by an injury; but out of a foolish vanity and pride. You sport yourselves in the ruin of the souls of others, and make their spiritual death your pastime." Hence he infers, how false and absurd their excuse is in saying, they mean no harm. These and many other scandals he abolished. He suppressed the wicked custom of swearing, first at Antioch, then at Constantinople. By the invincible power of his eloquence and zeal he tamed the fiercest sinners, and changed them into meek lambs: he converted an incredible number of idolators and heretics.(2) His mildness towards sinners was censured by the Novatians; he invited them to repentance with the compassion of the most tender father, and was accustomed to cry out: "If you are fallen a second time, or even a thousand times into sin, come to me, and you shall be

(1) St. Chrys. l. Quod regulares fœminæ, T. 1. p. 250.

(2) Stilling, s. 41. p. 526.

healed.”(1) But he was firm and severe in maintaining discipline though without harshness; to impenitent sinners he was inflexible.

To mention one instance of the success of his holy zeal out of the many which his sermons furnish; in the year 399, the second of his episcopacy, on Wednesday in Holy Week, so violent a rain fell as to endanger the corn, and threaten the whole produce of the country. Hereupon public processions were made to the church of the apostles by the bishop and people, to avert the scourge by imploring the intercession chiefly of St. Peter, St. Andrew, (who is regarded as the founder of the church of Byzantium,) St. Paul, and St. Timothy.* The rain ceased, but not their fears. Therefore they all crossed the Bosphorus to the church of SS. Peter and Paul, on the opposite side of the water. This danger was scarcely over when on the Friday following many ran to see certain horse-races, and on Holy Saturday to games exhibited at the theatre. The good bishop was pierced to the quick with grief, and on the next day, Easter-Sunday, preached a most zealous and eloquent sermon, against the Games and Shows of the Theatre and Circus. Indignation made him not so much as mention the paschal solemnity; but by an abrupt exordium he burst into the most vehement pathos, as follows: “Are these things to be borne? Can they be tolerated? I appeal to yourselves, be you your own judges. Thus did God expostulate with the Jews.(2) This exclamation he often repeated to assuage his grief.

He put the people in mind of the sanctity of our faith; of the rigorous account we must give to God of all our moments, and the obligation of serving him incumbent on us from his benefits, who has made for us the heaven and earth, the sun, light, rivers, &c. The saint grieved the more, because, after all, they said they had done no harm, though they had murdered not only their own souls, but also those of their children. “And how will you,” said he, “after this, approach the holy place? How will you touch the heavenly food? Even now do I see you overwhelmed with grief, and covered with confusion. I see some striking their foreheads, perhaps those who have not sinned, but are moved with compassion for their brethren. On this account do I grieve

(1) Phot. Cod. 59. Soer. l. 6. c. 21. Stilling, s. 40. p. 523.

(2) Mich. vi. 3. Jer. ii. 5.

* *Καὶ συνηγόρευς ἐλαμβάνομεν.* Chrys. Serm. contra ludos et spect. T. 6. p. 272. Ed. Ben. *Ἀνδρίαν Παῦλον καὶ Τιμόθεον.*

and suffer, that the devil should make such a havoc in such a flock. But if you join with me, we will shut him out. By what means? If we seek out the wounded, and snatch them out of his jaws. Do not tell me their number is but small: though they are but ten, this is a great loss: though but five, but two, or only one. The shepherd leaving ninety-nine, did not return till he had completed his number by recovering that sheep which was lost. Do not say, it is only one; but remember that it is a soul for which all things visible were made; for which laws were given, miracles wrought, and mysteries effected: for which God spared not his only Son. Think how great a price hath been paid for this one sheep, and bring him back to the fold. If he neither hears your persuasions nor my exhortations, I will employ the authority with which God hath invested me." He proceeds to declare such excommunicated. The consternation and penance of the city made the holy pastor forbear any further censure, and to commend their conversion. Palladius writes that he had the satisfaction to see those who had been most passionately fond of the entertainments of the stage and circus, moved by his sermons on that subject, entirely renounce those schools of the devil. God is more glorified by one perfect soul than by many who serve him with tepidity. Therefore, though every individual of his large flock was an object of his most tender affection and pastoral concern, those were particularly so, who had secluded themselves from the world, by embracing a religious state of life, the holy virgins and nuns. Describing their method of life, he says,(1) their clothing was sackcloth, and their beds only mats spread on the floor; that they watched part of the night in prayer, walked barefoot, never ate before evening, and never touched so much as bread, using no other food than pulse and herbs, and that they were always occupied in prayer, manual labour, or serving the sick of their own sex. The spiritual mother, and the sun of this holy company, St. Nicareta, is honoured December the 27th. Among the holy widows who dedicated themselves to God under the direction of this great master of saints, the most illustrious were the truly noble ladies St. Olympias, Salvina, Procula, and Pantacia. This last (who was the widow of Timasus, formerly the first minister to the emperor) was constituted by him deaconess of the church of Constantinople. Widows he considered as by their state called

(1) Hom. 13. in Ephes. T. 11. p. 95.

to a life of penance, retirement, and devotion; and he spared no exhortations or endeavours to engage them faithfully to correspond to the divine grace, according to the advice which St. Paul gives them.(1) St. Olympias claimed the privilege of furnishing the expenses of the saint's frugal table. He usually ate alone; few would have been willing to dine so late, or so coarsely and sparingly as he did; and he chose this to save both time and expenses: but he kept another table in a house near his palace, for the entertainment of strangers, which he took care should be decently supplied. He inveighed exceedingly against sumptuous banquets. All his revenues he laid out on the poor; for whose relief he sold the rich furniture which Nectarius had left, and once, in a great dearth, he caused some of the sacred vessels to be melted down for that purpose. This action was condemned by Theophilus, but is justly regarded by St. Austin as a high commendation of our holy prelate. Besides the public hospital near his cathedral, and several others which he founded and maintained, he erected two for strangers. His own patrimony he had given to the poor long before, at Antioch. His extraordinary charities obtained him the name of John of Almsdeeds.(2) The spiritual necessities of his neighbour were objects of far greater compassion to his tender charity. His diocess, nay, the whole world, he considered as a great hospital of souls, spiritually blind, deaf, sick, and in danger of perishing eternally; many standing on the brink, many daily falling from the frightful precipice into the unquenchable lake. Not content with tears and supplications to the Father of mercies for their salvation, he was indefatigable in labours and in every endeavour to open their eyes; feared no dangers, no, not death itself in its most frightful shapes, to succour them in their spiritual necessities, and prevent their fall. Neither was this pastoral care confined to his own flock or nation: he extended it to the remotest countries. He sent a bishop to instruct the Nomades or wandering Scythians: another, an admirable man, to the Goths. Palestine, Persia, and many other distant provinces felt the most beneficent influence of his zeal. He was himself endued with an eminent spirit of prayer: this he knew to be the great channel of heavenly graces, the cleanser of the affections of the soul from earthly dross, and the means which renders them spiritual and

(1) Pallad. in Vit. Chrysost. Item S. Chrysost. Hom. in 1 Tim. v. 5. l. 3. de Sacerd. c. 8. & l. ad Vid. junior. Sulting, s. 67. p. 603.

(2) Ἰωάννης ὁ τοῦ ἐλεημοσύνης. Pallad. c. 12.

heavenly, and makes men angels, even in their mortal body. He was therefore particularly earnest in inculcating this duty, and in instructing others in the manner of performing it.

He warmly exhorted the laity to rise to the midnight office of matins together with the clergy: "Many artizans," said he, "watch to labour, and soldiers watch as sentries; and cannot you do as much to praise God?"(1) He observes, that the silence of the night is peculiarly adapted to devout prayer, and the sighs of compunction: which exercise we ought never to interrupt too long; and by watching, prayer becomes more earnest and powerful. Women he will not have to go easily abroad to church in the night-time; but advises that even children rise in the night to say a short prayer, and as they cannot watch long, be put to bed again: for thus they will contract from their infancy a habit of watching, and a Christian's whole house will be converted into a church. The advantages and necessity of assiduous prayer he often recommends with singular energy; but he expresses himself on no subject with greater tenderness and force than on the excess of the divine love, which is displayed in the Holy Eucharist, and in exhorting the faithful to the frequent use of that heavenly sacrament. St. Proclus says,(2) that he abridged the liturgy of his church. St. Nilus(3) assures us, that he was often favoured with visions of angels in the church during the canonical hours, surrounding the altars in troops during the celebration of the divine mysteries, and at the communion of the people. The saint himself confidently avers, that this happens at those times,(4) which he confirms be the visions of several hermits.

The public concerns of the state often called on the saint to afford the spiritual succours of his zeal and charity. Eutropius was then at the head of affairs. He was an eunuch, and originally a slave; but had worked himself into favour with the emperor Arcadius. In 395 he was instrumental in cutting off Rufinus, the chief minister, who had broke out into an open rebellion, and he succeeded the traitor in all his honours: golden statues were erected to him in several parts of the city, and what Claudian, Marcellinus in his chronicle, Suidas, and others, represent as the most monstrous event that occurs in the Roman

(1) Hom. 2. & 25. in Acta. Hom. 14. in Hebr. Pallad. in Vit. S. Chry.

(2) S. Procl. Or. 22. p. 581. See Le Brun des Litur.

(3) L. 2. Ep. 294. p. 266.

(4) L. 3. de Sacerd.

Fasti, was declared consul, though an eunuch. Being placed on so high a pinnacle, a situation but too apt to turn the strongest head, forgetful of himself and the indispensable rules of decency and prudence, it was not long before he surpassed his predecessor in insolence, ambition, and covetousness. Wholesome advice even from a Chrysostom, served only to exasperate a heart devoted to the world, and open to flatterers, who added continually new flames to its passions. In the mean time the murmurs and indignation of the whole empire at the pride and avarice of Eutropius, were a secret to him, till the pit was prepared for his fall. Gainas, general of the auxiliary Goths in the imperial army, was stirred up to revenge an affront which his cousin Trigibildus, a tribune, had received from the haughty minister. At the same time the empress Eudoxia, having been insulted by him, ran to the emperor, carrying her two little babes in her arms, and cried out for justice against the insolent servant. Arcadius, who was as weak in abandoning as he was imprudent in choosing favourites, gave orders that the minister should be driven out of the court, and his estates confiscated. Eutropius found himself in a moment forsaken by all the herds of his admirers and flatterers, without one single friend, and fled for protection to the church, and to those very altars whose immunities he had infringed and violated. The whole city was in an uproar against him; the army called aloud for his death, and a troop of soldiers surrounded the church with naked swords in their hands, and fire in their eyes. St. Chrysostom went to the emperor, and easily obtained of him that the unhappy criminal might be allowed to enjoy the benefit of the sanctuary; and the soldiers were prevailed upon, by the tears of the emperor and the remonstrances of the bishop to withdraw. The next day the people flocked to behold a man whose frown two days before made the whole world to tremble, now laying hold of the altar, gnashing his teeth, trembling and shuddering, having nothing before his eyes but drawn swords, dungeons, and executioners. St. Chrysostom on this occasion made a pathetic discourse on the vanity and treachery of human things, the emptiness and falsehood of which he could not find a word emphatical enough to express. The poor Eutropius could not relish such truths a few days ago, but now found his very riches destructive. The saint entreated the people to forgive him whom the emperor, the chief person injured, was desirous to forgive:

he asked them how they could beg of God the pardon of their own sins if they did not pardon a man who then, by repentance, was perhaps a saint in the eyes of God. At this discourse not a single person in the church was able to refrain from tears, and all things seemed in a state of tranquillity.(1) Some days after, Eutropius left the church, hoping to escape privately out of the city, but was seized, and banished into Cyprus.* He was recalled a few months after, and being impeached of high treason was condemned and beheaded, chiefly at the instigation of Gainas; in compliance with whose unjust demands the weak emperor consented to the death of Aurelianus and Saturninus, two principal lords of his court. But St. Chrysostom, by several journeys, prevailed with the barbarian to content himself with their banishment, which they underwent, but were soon after recalled. As unjust concessions usually make rebels the more insolent, Gainas hereupon obliged the emperor to declare him commander-in-chief of all his troops. Yet even when his pride and power were at the highest, St. Chrysostom refused him the use of any Catholic church in Constantinople for the Arian worship. And when, some time after, he laid siege to that capital, the saint went out to him, and by kind expostulations prevailed on him to withhold his design and draw off his army. He was afterwards defeated in passing the Hellespont; and fleeing through the country of the Huns, was overthrown, and slain by them in 400.

This same year, 400, St. Chrysostom held a council of bishops in Constantinople; one of whom had preferred a complaint against his metropolitan Antoninus, the archbishop of Ephesus, which consisted of several heads, but that chiefly insisted on was simony.(2) All our saint's endeavours to discuss this affair being frustrated by the distance of places, he found it necessary, at the solicitation of the clergy and people of Ephesus, to go in person to that city, though the severity of the winter season, and the ill state of health he was then in, might be sufficient motives for retarding this journey. In this and the neighbouring cities several councils were held, in which the archbishop of Ephesus and several other bishops in Asia, Lycia, and Phrygia, were deposed for simony. Upon his return after Easter, in 401, having

(1) Stilting, s. 43. p. 530 et seq. (2) Pallad. Dial. p. 127. Stilting, s. 47. p. 542.

About this time the poet Claudian wrote his two books against Eutropius, as he had done before against Rufinus.

been absent a hundred days, he preached the next morning, (1) calling his people, in the transport of tender joy, his crown, his glory, his paradise planted with flourishing trees; but if any bad shrubs should be found in it, he promised that no pains should be spared to change them into good. He bid them consider if they rejoiced so much as they testified, to see him again who was only one, how great his joy must be which was multiplied in every one of them: he calls himself their bond-slave, chained to their service, but says, that slavery was his delight, and that during his absence he ever had them present to his mind, offering up his prayers for their temporal and spiritual welfare.

It remained that our saint should glorify God by his sufferings as he had already done by his labours: and if we contemplate the mystery of the cross with the eyes of faith, we shall find him greater in the persecutions he sustained than in all the other occurrences of his life. At the same time we cannot sufficiently deplore the blindness of envy and pride in his enemies, as in the Pharisees against Christ himself. We ought to tremble for ourselves: if that passion does not make us persecute a Chrysostom, it may often betray us into rash judgments, aversions, and other sins, even under a cloak of virtue. The first open adversary of our saint was Severianus, bishop of Gabala, in Syria, to whom the saint had left the care of his church during his absence. This man had acquired the reputation of a preacher, was a favourite of the empress Eudoxia, and had employed all his talents and dexterity to establish himself in the good opinion of the court and people, to the prejudice of the saint, against whom he had preached in his own city. Severianus being obliged to leave Constantinople at the saint's return, he made an excellent discourse to his flock on the peace Christ came to establish on earth, and begged they would receive again Severianus, whom they had expelled the city. Another enemy of the saint was Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, whom Sozomen, Socrates, Palladius, St. Isidore of Pelusium, and Synesius accuse of avarice and oppressions to gratify his vanity in building stately churches; of pride, envy, revenge, dissimulation, and an uncontrollable love of power and rule, by which he treated other bishops as his slaves, and made his will the rule of justice. His three paschal letters, which have reached us, show that he wrote

(1) T. 3. p. 411.

without method, and that his reflections and reasonings were neither just nor apposite: whence the loss of his other writings is not much to be regretted. These spiritual vices sullied his zeal against the Anthropomorphites, and his other virtues. He died in 412, wishing that he had lived always in a desert, honouring the name of the holy Chrysostom, whose picture he caused to be brought to his bed-side, and by reverencing it, showed his desire to make atonement for his past ill conduct towards our saint.(1) This turbulent man had driven from their retreat four abbots of Nitria, called the tall brothers, on a groundless suspicion of Origenism, as appears from Palladius, though it was believed by St. Jerom, which is maintained by Baronius. St. Chrysostom admitted them to communion, but not till they had juridicially cleared themselves of it in an ample manner.(2) This however was grievously resented by Theophilus: but the empress Eudoxia, who after the disgrace of Eutropius, governed her husband and the empire, was the main spring which moved the whole conspiracy against the saint. Zozimus, a heathen historian, says that her flagrant avarice, her extortions and injustices knew no bounds, and that the court was filled with informers, calumniators, and harpies, who being always on the watch for prey, found means to seize the estates of such as died rich, and to disinherit their children or other heirs. No wonder that a saint should displease such a court whilst he discharged his duty to God.

He had preached a sermon against the extravagance and vanity of women in dress and pomp. This was pretended by some to have been levelled at the empress; and Severianus was not wanting to blow the coals. Knowing Theophilus was no friend to the saint, the empress, to be revenged of the supposed affront, sent to desire his presence at Constantinople, in order to depose him. He obeyed the summons with pleasure, and landed at Constantinople, in June 403, with several Egyptian bishops, his creatures; refused to see or lodge with John, and got together a packed cabal of thirty-six bishops, the saint's enemies, in a church at Chalcedon, calling themselves the synod at the Oak, from a great tree which gave name to that quarter of the town. The heads of the impeachment drawn up against the holy bishop were, that he had deposed a deacon for beating a servant; that

(1) S. Joan. Damasc. Orat. 3. de Imaginibus, p. 480. ed. Billii. See F. Sollier, in Hist. Chronol. Patriarch. Alexand. in Theophilo, p. 52.

(2) See Stilting, s. 54, 55, 56. p. 567.

he had called several of his clergy base men; had deposed bishops out of his province; had ordained priests in his domestic chapel, instead of the cathedral; had sold things belonging to the church; that nobody knew what became of his revenues; that he ate alone; and that he gave the holy communion to persons who were not fasting: all which were false or frivolous. The saint held a legal council of forty bishops in the city at the same time; and refused to appear before that at the Oak, alleging most notorious infractions of the canons in their pretended council. The cabal proceeded to a sentence of deposition, which they sent to the city and to the emperor, to whom they also accused him of treason, for having called the empress Jezabel; a false assertion, as Palladius testifies. The emperor hereupon issued out an order for his banishment, but the execution of it was opposed by the people, who assembled about the great church to guard their pastor. He made them a farewell sermon,(1) in which he spoke as follows: "Violent storms encompass me on all sides; yet I am without fear, because I stand upon a rock. Though the sea roars, and the waves rise high, they cannot sink the vessel of Jesus. I fear not death, which is my gain; nor banishment, for the whole earth is the Lord's; nor the loss of goods, for I came naked into the world, and must leave it in the same condition. I despise all the terrors of the world, and trample upon its smiles and favour. Nor do I desire to live unless for your service. Christ is with me: whom shall I fear? Though waves rise against me: though the sea, though the fury of princes threaten me, all these are to me more contemptible than a spider's web. I always say: O Lord, may thy will be done: not what this or that creature wills, but what it shall please thee to appoint, that shall I do and suffer with joy. This is my strong tower: this is my unshaken rock: this is my staff that can never fail. If God be pleased that it be done, let it be so. Wheresoever his will is that I be, I return him thanks." He declared that he was ready to lay down a thousand lives for them, if at his disposal, and that he suffered only because he had neglected nothing to save their souls.

On the third day after the unjust sentence given against him, having received repeated orders from the emperor to go into banishment, and taking all possible care to prevent a sedition, he

(1) T. 3. p. 415.

surrendered himself, unknown to the people, to the Count, who conducted him to Prænētum in Bithynia. After his departure his enemies entered the city with guards, and Severianus mounted the pulpit, and began to preach, pretending to show the deposition of the saint to have been legal and just. But the people would not suffer him to proceed, and ran about as if distracted, loudly demanding in a body the restoration of their holy pastor. The next night the city was shook with an earthquake. This brought the empress to reflect with remorse on what she had done against the holy bishop. She applied immediately to the emperor under the greatest consternation for his being recalled; crying out: "Unless John be recalled, our empire is undone:" and with his consent she despatched letters the same night, inviting him home with tender expressions of affection and esteem, and protesting her ignorance of his banishment. Almost all the city went out to meet him, and great numbers of lighted torches were carried before him. He stopped in the suburbs, refusing to enter the city till he had been declared innocent by a more numerous assembly of bishops. But the people would suffer no delay: the enemies of the saint fled, and he resumed his functions, and preached to his flock. He pressed the emperor to call Theophilus to a legal synod: but that obstinate persecutor alleged, that he could not return without danger of his life. However, Sozomen relates, that threescore bishops ratified his return: but the fair weather did not last long. A silver statue of the empress having been erected on a pillar before the great church of St. Sophia, the dedication of it was celebrated with public games, which, besides disturbing the divine service, engaged the spectators in extravagancies and superstition. Saint Chrysostom had often preached against licentious shows: and the very place rendered these the more criminal. On this occasion, fearing lest his silence should be construed as an approbation of the thing, he, with his usual freedom and courage, spoke loudly against it. Though this could only affect the Manichæan overseer of those games, the vanity of the empress made her take the affront to herself, and her desires of revenge were implacable.* His enemies were

* Socrates and Sozomen say that he preached another sermon against the empress, beginning with these words: Herodias is again become furious. But Montfaucon refutes this slander, trumped up by his enemies. The sermon extant under that title is a manifest forgery. T. 3. in spuris, p. 1 See Montfaucon, and Stilling. s. 63. p. 593

invited back: Theophilus durst not come, but sent three deputies. Though St. John had forty-two bishops with him, this second cabal urged to the emperor certain canons of an Arian council of Antioch, made only to exclude Saint Athanasius, by which it was ordained that no bishop who had been deposed by a synod, should return to his see till he was restored by another synod. This false plea overruled the justice of the saint's cause, and Arcadius sent him an order to withdraw. He refused to forsake a church committed to him by God, unless forcibly compelled to leave it. The emperor sent troops to drive the people out of the churches on Holy-Saturday, and the holy places were polluted with blood and all manner of outrages. The saint wrote to Pope Innocent, begging him to declare void all that had been done; for no injustice could be more notorious.(1) He also wrote to beg the concurrence of certain other holy bishops of the West. The pope having received from Theophilus the acts of the false council at the Oak, even by them saw the glaring injustice of its proceedings, and wrote to him, exhorting him to appear in another council, where sentence should be given according to the canons of Nice, meaning by those words to condemn the Arian canons of Antioch. He also wrote to Saint Chrysostom, to his flock, and several of his friends: and endeavoured to redress these evils by a new council: as did also the emperor Honorius. But Arcadius and Eudoxia found means to prevent its assembling, the very dread of which made Theophilus, Severianus, and other ring-leaders of the faction to tremble.

St. Chrysostom was suffered to remain at Constantinople two months after Easter. On Thursday in Whitsun-week the emperor sent him an order for his banishment. The holy man, who received it in the church, said to those about him: "Come, let us pray, and take leave of the angel of the church." He took leave of the bishops, and, stepping into the baptistery, also of St. Olympias and the other deaconesses, who were overwhelmed with grief and bathed in tears. He then retired privately out of the church, to prevent a sedition, and was conducted by Lucius, a brutish captain, into Bithynia, and arrived at Nice on the 20th of June, 404. After his departure a fire breaking out, burnt down the great church and the senate-house, two buildings which were the glory of the city: but the baptistery was spared

(1) Op. T. 3. p. 515. Pallad. Dial. Stilting, s. 53. p. 578.

by the flames, as it were to justify the saint against his calumniators; for not one of the rich vessels was found wanting. In this senate-house perished the incomparable statues of the muses from Helicon, and other like ornaments, the most valuable then known: so that Sozimus looks upon this conflagration as the greatest misfortune that had ever befallen that city. Palladius ascribes the fire to the anger of heaven. Many of the saint's friends were put to the most exquisite tortures on this account, but no discovery could be made. The Isaurians plundered Asia, and the Huns several other provinces. Eudoxia ended her life and crimes in childbed on the 6th of October following, five days after a furious hail-storm had made a dreadful havoc in the city. The emperor wrote to St. Nilus to recommend himself and his empire to his prayers. The hermit answered him with a liberty of speech which became one who neither hoped nor feared any thing from the world. "How do you hope," said he, "to see Constantinople delivered from the destroying angel of God, after such enormities authorized by laws? after having banished the most blessed John, the pillar of the church, the lamp of truth, the trumpet of Jesus Christ!"(1) And again: "You have banished John, the greatest light of the earth:—At least do not persevere in your crime."(2) His brother, the emperor Honorius, wrote still in stronger terms,(3) and several others. But in vain: for certain implacable court ladies and sycophants, hardened against all admonitions and remorse, had much too powerful an ascendant over the unhappy emperor for these efforts of the saint's friends to meet with success. Arsacius, his enemy and persecutor, though naturally a soft and weak man, was by the emperor's authority intruded into his see. The saint enjoyed himself comfortably at Nice: but Cucusus was pitched upon by Eudoxia for the place of his banishment. He set out from Nice in July 404, and suffered incredible hardships from heats, fatigues, severity of guards, almost perpetual watchings, and a fever which soon seized him with pains in his breast. He was forced to travel almost all night, deprived of every necessary of life, and was wonderfully refreshed if he got a little clear water to drink, fresh bread to eat, or a bed to take a little rest upon. All he lamented was the impenitence of his enemies, for their own sake: calling impunity in sin, and honour conferred by men on

(1) S. Nilus, l. 2. ep. 265.

(2) L. 3. ep. 279.

(3) T. 3. p. 525.

that account, the most dreadful of all judgments.(1) About the end of August, after a seventy days' journey, he arrived at Cucusus, a poor town in Armenia, in the deserts of Mount Taurus. The good bishop of the place vied with his people in showing the man of God the greatest marks of veneration and civility, and many friends met him there both from Constantinople and Antioch. In this place, by sending missionaries and succours, he promoted the conversion of many heathen countries, especially among the Goths, in Persia and Phœnicia. He appointed Constantius, his friend, a priest of Antioch, superior of the apostolic missions in Phœnicia and Arabia.

The letters of Constantius are added to those of St. Chrysostom. The seventeen letters of our saint to St. Olympias might be styled treatises. He tells her,(2) "I daily exult and am transported with joy in my heart under my sufferings, in which I find a hidden treasure: and I beg that you rejoice on the same account, and that you bless and praise God, by whose mercy we obtain to such a degree the grace of suffering." He often enlarges on the great evils and most pernicious consequences of sadness and dejection of spirit, which he calls(3) "the worst of human evils, a perpetual domestic rack, a darkness and tempest of the mind, an interior war, a distemper which consumes the vigour of the soul, and impairs all her faculties." He shows(4) that sickness is the greatest of trials, a time not of inaction, but of the greatest merit, the school of all virtues, and a true martyrdom. He advises her to use physic, and says it would be a criminal impatience to wish for death to be freed from sufferings. He laments the fall of Pelagius, whose heresies he abhorred. He wrote to this lady his excellent treatise, "That no one can hurt him who does not hurt himself." Arsacius dying in 405, many ambitiously aspired to that dignity, whose very seeking was sufficient to prove them unworthy. Atticus, one of this number, a violent enemy to St. Chrysostom, was preferred by the Court, and placed in his chair. The Pope refused to hold communion with Theophilus, or any of the abettors of the persecution of our saint.(5) He and the emperor Honorius sent five bishops to Constantinople to insist on a council, and that in the mean time St. Chrysostom should be restored to his see, his deposition having been notoriously unjust.(6) But the deputies

(1) Ep. 8.

(3) Ibid. 3. p. 552.

(5) Pallad. Theodoret, l. 5. c. 34.

(2) Ep. 8. p. 589.

(4) Ibid. 4. p. 570.

(6) Pallad. Sozom. l. 2. c. 23.

were cast into prison in Thrace, because they refused to communicate with Atticus. The persecutors saw that, if a council was held, they would be inevitably condemned and deposed by it, therefore they stopped at nothing to prevent its meeting. The incursions of the Isaurian plunderers obliged St. Chrysostom to take shelter in the castle of Arabissus, on Mount Taurus. He enjoyed a tolerable state of health during the year 406 and the winter following, though it was extremely cold in those mountains, so that the Armenians were surprised to see how his thin weak body was able to support it. When the Isaurians had quitted the neighbourhood, he returned to Cucusus. But his impious enemies, seeing the whole Christian world honouring and defending him, resolved to rid the world of him. With this view they procured an order from the emperor that he should be removed to Arabissus, and thence to Pytius, a town situated on the Euxine sea, near Colchis, at the extremity of the empire, on the frontiers of the Sarmatians, the most barbarous of the Scythians. Two officers were ordered to convey him thither in a limited number of days, through very rough roads, with a promise of promotion if, by hard usage, he should die in their hands. One of these was not altogether destitute of humanity, but the other could not bear to hear a mild word spoken to him. They often travelled amidst scorching heats, from which his head, that was bald, suffered exceedingly. In the most violent rains they forced him out of doors, obliging him to travel till the water ran in streams down his back and bosom. When they arrived at Comana Pontica, in Cappadocia, he was very sick; yet was hurried five or six miles to the martyrion or chapel in which lay the relics of the martyr St. Basiliscus.* The saint was lodged in the oratory of the priest. In the night, that holy martyr appearing to him, said: "Be of good courage brother John; to-morrow we shall be together." The confessor was filled with joy at this news, and begged that he might stay there till eleven o'clock. This made the guards drag him out the more violently;

* The passage of Palladius, in which St. Basiliscus is called bishop of Comana, is evidently falsified by the mistake of copiers, as Stilling demonstrates; who shows this Basiliscus to have suffered not at Nicomedia, but near Comana, in the country where his relics remained; the same that is honoured on the 3rd of March. It is without grounds that Tillemont, Le Quien, &c. imagine there were two martyrs of the same name; the one a soldier, who suffered at Comana under Galerius Maximian: the other, bishop of that city. T. 5. in S. Basilisc. note 4. See Stilling, s. 83. p. 665.

but when they had travelled four miles, perceiving him in a dying condition, they brought him back to the oratory. He there changed all his clothes to his very shoes, putting on his best attire, which was all white, as if he meant it for his heavenly nuptials. He was yet fasting, and having received the holy sacrament, poured forth his last prayer, which he closed with his usual doxology: Glory be to God for all things. Having said Amen, and signed himself with the sign of the cross, he sweetly gave up his soul to God, on the feast of the exaltation of the holy cross, the 14th of September, as appears from the Menææ, in 407, having been bishop nine years and almost seven months.*

His remains were interred by the body of St. Basiliscus, a great concourse of holy virgins, monks, and persons of all ranks from a great distance flocking to his funeral. The pope refused all communion with those who would not allow his name a place in the Dyptics or registers of Catholic bishops deceased. It was inserted at Constantinople by Atticus, in 417, and at Alexandria, by St. Cyril, in 419: for Nestorius tells him that he then venerated the ashes of John against his will.(1) His body was translated to Constantinople in 434, by St. Proclus with the utmost pomp, the Emperor Theodosius and his sister Pulcheria accompanying St. Proclus in the procession, and begging pardon for the sins of their parents who had unadvisedly persecuted this servant of God. The precious remains were laid in the church of the apostles, the burying place of the emperors and bishops, on the 27th of January, 438; on which day he is honoured by the Latins: but the Greeks keep his festival on the 13th of November.(2) His ashes were afterwards carried to Rome, and rest under an altar which bears his name in the Vatican church. The saint was low in stature; and his thin, mortified countenance bespoke the severity of his life. The austerities of his youth, his cold solitary abode in the mountains, and the fatigues of continual preaching, had weakened his breast, which occasioned his frequent distempers. But the hardships of his exile were such as must have destroyed a person of the

(1) Nestorius, Or. 12. apud Marium Mercat. par. 2. p. 86. ed Garnier. Stilling, s. 88. p. 685.

(2) Jos. Assemani. Comm. in Calend. Univ. T. 6. p. 105. and Stilling.

* Sir Harry Saville is of opinion that he was only fifty-two years old: but he must have been sixty-three, as born in 344.

most robust constitution. Pope Celestine, St. Austin, St. Nilus, St. Isidore of Pelusium, and others call him the illustrious doctor of churches, whose glory shines on every side, who fills the earth with the light of his profound sacred learning, and who instructs by his works the remotest corners of the world, preaching every where, even where his voice could not reach. They style him the wise interpreter of the secrets of God, the sun of the whole universe, the lamp of virtue, and the most shining star of the earth. The incomparable writings of this glorious saint, make his standing and most authentic eulogium.

In the character which St. Chrysostom has in several places drawn of divine and fraternal charity and holy zeal, we have a true portraiture of his holy soul. He excellently shows, from the words of our Lord to St. Peter,(1) that the primary and essential disposition of a pastor of souls is a pure and most ardent love of God, whose love for these souls is so great, that he has delivered his Son to death for them. Jesus Christ shed his blood to save this flock, which he commits to the care of St. Peter. Nothing can be stronger or more tender than the manner in which this saint frequently expresses his charity and solicitude for his spiritual children.(2) When he touches this topic, his words are all fire and flame, and seem to breathe the fervour of St. Peter, the zeal of St. Paul, and the charity of Moses. This favourite of God was not afraid, for the salvation of his people, to desire to be separated from the company of the saints, provided this could have been done without falling from the love of God; though he knew that nothing would more closely unite him for ever to God than this extraordinary effort of his love. The apostle of nations desired to be an anathema for his brethren, and for their salvation;(3) and the prince of the apostles gave the strongest proof of the ardour of his love for Christ by the floods of tears which he shed for his flock. From the same furnace of divine love St. Chrysostom drew the like sentiments towards his flock, joined with the sovereign contempt of all earthly things; another distinguishing property of charity, which he describes in the following words:(4) "Those who burn with a spiritual love, consider as nothing all that is shining or precious on earth. We are not to be surprised if we understand not this language, who have no experience of this sublime virtue. For whoever should

(1) Joan. xxi. 17. St. Chrys. l. 2. de Sacerd. c. 1.

(2) Hom. 3. & 44. in Act. et alibi sæpe.

(3) See St. Chrys. hom. 16 in Rom. (4) Hom. 52. in Acta.

be inflamed with the fire of the perfect love of Jesus Christ, would be in such dispositions with regard to the earth, that he would be indifferent both to its honours and to its disgrace, and would be no more concerned about its trifles than if he were alone in the world. He would despise sufferings, scourges, and dungeons, as if they were endured in another's body, not in his own; and would be as insensible to the pleasures and enjoyments of the world, as we are to the bodies of the dead, or as the dead are to their own bodies. He would be as pure from the stain of any inordinate passions, as gold perfectly refined is from all rust or spot. And as flies beware of falling in to the flames, and keep at a distance, so irregular passions dare not approach him."

ON THE WRITINGS

OF

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM.

IN the Benedictine edition of his works given by Dom Montfaucon, we have in the first tome his Two Exhortations to Theodorus; three Books Against the Adversaries of a Monastic Life:—The Comparison between a King and a Monk: two books on Compunction: three books to Stagirus the monk, on Tribulation and Providence: Against those Clergymen who harbour Women under their roof to serve them: another treatise to prove, That Deaconesses, or other Regular Women, ought not to live under the same roof with Men: On Virginity: To a young Widow: On the Priesthood: and a considerable number of scattered homilies. Theodorus, after renouncing the advantages which high birth, a plentiful estate, a polite education, and an uncommon stock of learning offered him in the world, and having solemnly consecrated himself to God in a monastic state, violated his sacred engagement, returned into the world, took upon him the administration of his estate, fell in love with a beautiful young woman named Hermione, and desired to marry her. St. Chrysostom, who had formerly been his schoolfellow, under Libanius, and been afterwards instrumental in inducing him to forsake the world, and some time his companion in a religious state, grievously lamented his unhappy fall; and by two most tender and pathetic exhortations to repentance, gained him again to God. Every word is dictated by the most ardent zeal and charity, and powerfully insinuates itself into the heart by the charm of an unparalleled sweetness, which gives to the strength of the most persuasive eloquence an irresistible force. Nothing of the kind extant is more beautiful, or more tender, than these two pieces, especially the former. The saint, in the beginning, borrows the most moving parts of the lamentations of Jeremy, showing that he had far more reason to abandon himself to bitter grief than that prophet; for he mourned not for a material temple and city with the holy ark and the tables of the law; but for an immortal soul, far more precious than the whole material world. And if one soul which observes the divine law is greater and better than ten thousand which transgress it,