

a bow bent with an arrow in it. See the Aberdeen Breviary, the chronicle of Pasley, (a great monastery of regular canons in the shire of Renfrew,) Florarium, and Buchanan, l. 5.

MARCH XI.

ST. EULOGIUS OF CORDOVA, P. M.

From his authentic life by Alvarus, his intimate friend, and from his works, Bibl. Patr. t. 9. See Acta Sanct. t. 7. Fleury, b. 48. p. 57.

A.D. 859.

ST. EULOGIUS was of a senatorian family of Cordova, at that time the capital of the Moors or Saracens in Spain. Those infidels had till then tolerated the Christian religion among the Goths, exacting only a certain tribute every new moon. Our saint was educated among the clergy of the church of St. Zoilus, a martyr, who suffered at Cordova, with nineteen others, under Dioclesian, and is honoured on the 27th of June. Here he distinguished himself by his virtue and learning; and being made priest, was placed at the head of the chief ecclesiastical school in Spain, which then flourished at Cordova. He joined assiduous watching, fasting and prayer, to his studies: and his humility, mildness, and charity gained him the affection and respect of every one. He often visited the monasteries for his further instruction in virtue, and prescribed rules of piety for the use of many fervent souls that desired to serve God. Some of the Christians were so indiscreet as openly to inveigh against Mahomet, and expose the religion established by him. This occasioned a bloody persecution at Cordova, in the 29th year of Abderrama III. the eight hundred and fiftieth year of Christ. Reccafred, an apostate bishop, declared against the martyrs: and, at his solicitation, the bishop of Cordova and some others were imprisoned, and many priests, among whom was St. Eulogius, as one who encouraged the martyrs by his instructions. It was then that he wrote his Exhortation to Martyrdom, (1) addressed to the virgins Flora and Mary, who were beheaded the 24th of November, in 851. These virgins promised to pray as soon as they should be with God, that

(1) Documentum Martyrii, t. 9. Bibl. Patr. p. 699.

their fellow-prisoners might be restored to their liberty. Accordingly St. Eulogius and the rest were enlarged six days after their death. In the year 852, several suffered the like martyrdom, namely, Gumisund and Servus-Dei: Aurelius and Felix with their wives: Christopher and Levigild: Rogel and Servio-Deo. A council at Cordova, in 852, forbade any one to offer himself to martyrdom. Mahomet succeeded his father upon his sudden death by an apoplectic fit; but continued the persecution, and put to death, in 853, Fandila, a monk, Anastasius, Felix, and three nuns, Digna, Columba, and Pomposa. Saint Eulogius encouraged all these martyrs to their triumphs, and was the support of that distressed flock. His writings still breathe an inflamed zeal and spirit of martyrdom. The chief are his history of these martyrs, called the Memorial of the Saints, in three books; and his Apology for them against calumniators, showing them to be true martyrs, though without miracles.* His brother was deprived of his place, one of the first dignities of the kingdom. St. Eulogius himself was obliged by the persecutors to live always, after his releasement, with the treacherous bishop Reccafred, that wolf in sheep's clothing. Wherefore he refrained from saying mass, that he might not communicate with that domestic enemy.

The archbishop of Toledo dying in 858, St. Eulogius was canonically elected to succeed him; but there was some obstacle that hindered him from being consecrated; though he did not outlive his election two months. A virgin, by name Leocritia, of a noble family among the Moors, had been instructed from her infancy in the Christian religion by one of her relations, and privately baptized. Her father and mother perceiving this, used her very ill, and scourged her day and night to compel her to renounce the faith. Having made her condition known to St. Eulogius and his sister Anulona, intimating that she desired to go where she might freely exercise her religion, they secretly procured her the means of getting away from her parents, and concealed her for some time among faithful friends. But the matter was at length discovered, and they were all brought before the *cadi*. Eulogius offered to show the judge the true road to heaven, and to demonstrate Mahomet to be an impostor.

* Some objected to these martyrs, that they were not honoured with frequent miracles as those had been who suffered in the primitive ages.

The cadi threatened to have him scourged to death. The martyr told him his torments would be to no purpose; for he would never change his religion. Whereupon the cadi gave orders that he should be carried to the palace, and presented before the king's council. One of the lords of the council took the saint aside, and said to him: "Though the ignorant unhappily run headlong to death, a man of your learning and virtue ought not to imitate their folly. Be ruled by me, I entreat you: say but one word since necessity requires it: you may afterwards resume your own religion, and we will promise that no inquiry shall be made after you." Eulogius replied, smiling: "Ah! if you could but conceive the reward which waits for those who persevere in the faith to the end, you would renounce your temporal dignity in exchange for it." He then began boldly to propose the truths of the gospel to them. But to prevent their hearing him, the council condemned him immediately to lose his head. As they were leading him to execution, one of the eunuchs of the palace gave him a blow on the face for having spoken against Mahomet: he turned the other cheek, and patiently received a second. He received the stroke of death out of the city-gates, with great cheerfulness, on the 11th of March, 859. St. Leocritia was beheaded four days after him, and her body thrown into the river B tis, or Guadalquivir, but taken out by the Christians. The Church honours both of them on the days of their martyrdom.

If we consider the conduct of Christ towards his Church, which he planted at the price of his precious blood, and treats as his most beloved spouse, we shall admire a wonderful secret in the adorable councils of his tender providence. This Church, so dear to him, and so precious in his eyes, he formed and spread under a general most severe and dreadful persecution. He has exposed it in every age to frequent and violent storms, and seems to delight in always holding at least some part or other of it in the fiery crucible. But the days of its severest trials were those of its most glorious triumphs. Then it shone above all other periods of time with the brightest examples of sanctity, and exhibited both to heaven and to men on earth the most glorious spectacles and triumphs. Then were formed in its bosom innumerable most illustrious heroes of all perfect virtue, who eminently inherited, and propagated in the hearts of many others, the true spirit of our crucified Redeemer. The same conduct God in his tender mercy holds with regard to those chosen

souls which he destines to raise, by special graces, highest in his favour. When the councils of divine providence shall be manifested to them in the next life, then they shall clearly see that their trials were the most happy moments, and the most precious graces of their whole lives. In sickness, humiliations, and other crosses, the poison of self-love was expelled from their hearts, their affections weaned from the world, opportunities were afforded them of practising the most heroic virtues, by the fervent exercise of which their souls were formed in the school of Christ, and his perfect spirit of humility, meekness, disengagement, and purity of the affections, ardent charity, and all other virtues, in which true Christian heroism consists. The forming of the heart of one saint is a great and sublime work, the masterpiece of divine grace, the end and the price of the death of the Son of God. It can only be finished by the cross on which we were engendered in Christ, and the mystery of our predestination is accomplished.

ST. SOPHRONIUS, PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM,

CONFESSOR.

HE was a native of Damascus, and made such a progress in learning that he obtained the name of the Sophist. He lived twenty years near Jerusalem, under the direction of John Moschus, an holy hermit, without engaging himself in a religious state. These two great men visited together the monasteries of Egypt, and were detained by St. John the Almoner, at Alexandria, about the year 610, and employed by him two years in extirpating the Eutychians, and in reforming his diocess. John Moschus wrote there his *Spiritual Meadow* which he dedicated to Sophronius. He made a collection in that book of the edifying examples of virtue which he had seen or heard of among the monks, and died shortly after at Rome. Athanasius, patriarch of the Jacobites or Eutychians, in Syria, acknowledged two distinct natures in Christ, the divine and the human; but allowed only one will. This Demi-Eutychianism was a glaring inconsistency: because the will is the property of the nature. Moreover, Christ sometimes speaks of his human will distinct from the divine, as in his prayer in his agony in the garden. This Monothelite heresy seemed an expedient whereby to compound with the Eutychians. The Emperor Heraclius confirmed