

burnt by the fury of the Calvinists in the sixteenth century. See his life written soon after his death in Mabillon, *Act. Bened.* t. 3, p. 237; and more full, with new remarks, by Cuper the Bollandist, *Jul. t.* 5, p. 81.

ST. JEROM ÆMILIANI, C.

FOUNDER OF THE CONGREGATION OF REGULAR CLERGY OF
SOMASCHA.

HE was born at Venice of a patrician family; and, in the most troublesome times of the republic, served in the troops from his childhood. Whilst he was governor of the new castle in the mountains of Tarviso, he was taken prisoner, cast into a dungeon, and loaded with chains. His sufferings he sanctified by penance and prayer; and being delivered by the miraculous protection of the mother of God, arriving at Tarviso, he hung up his chains before an altar consecrated to God under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin, and returning to Venice devoted himself to the exercises of prayer and all virtues. At that time a famine and a contagious distemper having reduced many families to the greatest distress, he laid himself out in relieving all, but was particularly moved with compassion for abandoned orphans. These he gathered in a house which he hired, clothed and fed them at his own expense, and instructed them himself with unwearied zeal in the Christian doctrine and in all virtue. By the advice of St. Cajetan and others, he passed to the continent and erected similar hospitals for orphans at Brescia, Bergamo, and other places; and others for the reception of penitent women. At Somascha on the frontiers of the Venitian dominions between Bergamo and Milan, he founded a house which he destined for the exercises of those whom he received into his Congregation, and in which he long resided. From this house it took its name; though it was sometimes called St. Mayeul's, titular of a college at Pavia, which St. Charles Borromeo put under his direction.

The instruction of youth and young clergymen became also an object of his zeal in his foundations, and continues still to be in his institute. The brothers, during the life of the founder, were all laymen, and it was only approved as a pious Congre-

gation. The holy founder died at Somascha on the 8th of February, 1537, of a contagious distemper which he had caught by attending the sick. He was beatified by Benedict XIV.; and canonized by Clement XIII. An office in his honour was appointed for the 20th of July, by a decree of the holy see published in 1769. Three years after his death, in 1540, his Congregation was declared a religious Order by Paul III., and confirmed under the rule of St. Augustine by St. Pius V., in 1571, and again by Sixtus V., in 1586. It has no houses out of Italy and the Catholic Swiss Cantons. It is divided into three provinces, of Lombardy, Venice, and Rome. The general is chosen every three years out of each province in its turn. See his life written in Latin by Aug. Turtura, Milan, 1620, 8vo., and Helyot, *Histoire des Ord. Rel.* t. 4, c. 33.

JULY XXI.

ST. PRAXEDES, VIRGIN.

SHE was daughter of Pudens, a Roman senator, and sister to St. Pudentiana, and in the days of Pope Pius I. and the emperor Antoninus Pius, edified the church of Rome by the bright lustre of her virtues. All her great riches she employed in relieving the poor and the necessities of the church. By the comfort and succours which she afforded the martyrs she endeavoured to make herself partaker of their crowns, and she lived in the assiduous exercise of prayer, watching, and fasting. She died in peace and was buried near her sister on the Salarian road. Bede and other martyrologists style her a virgin. An old *title* or parish church in Rome bearing her name is mentioned in the life of Pope Symmachus. It was repaired by Adrian I. and Paschal I. and lastly by St. Charles Borromeo, who took from it his title of cardinal.

The primitive Christians lived only for heaven, and in every step looked up to God, regardless of all lower pursuits or meaner advantages that could interfere with their great design of knowing and loving him. This constant attention to God awed them in their retirements; this gave life and wings to their devotions,