

selves Christians, live enslaved to shameful passions. In order to convert, or at least to confound them, he preached a most zealous sermon against the vices which reigned amongst them; at which a barbarous mob was so enraged as fiercely to assault him; and one of them, stabbing him with a lance, procured him the glorious crown of martyrdom, about the year 815. This account of him is given us by Krantzius, (l. 1. Metrop. c. 22. & 29.) Lesley, l. 5. Hist. Wion, l. 3. Ligni Vitæ.

FEBRUARY XVII.

ST. FLAVIAN, M.

ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

From the councils, and Historians Cedrenus, Evagrius, Theophanes, &c See Baronius, Henschenius, t. 3. Feb. p. 71. Fleury, l. 27, 28. Quesne in his edition of the works of St. Leo, t. 2. diss. 1. and F. Cacciari, t. 3 Exercit. in opera St. Leonis, Romæ, an. 1755. Dissert. 4 de Eutychiana Hær. l. 1. c. 2. p. 322. c. 8. p. 383. c. 9. p. 393. c. 11. p. 432.

A.D. 449.

ST. FLAVIAN was a priest of distinguished merit, and treasurer of the church of Constantinople, when he succeeded St. Proclus in the archiepiscopal dignity in 447. The eunuch Chrysaphius, chamberlain to the emperor Theodosius the Younger, and a particular favourite, suggested to his master, a weak prince, to require of him a present, out of gratitude to the emperor for his promotion. The holy bishop sent him some blessed bread, according to the custom of the church at that time, as a benediction and symbol of communion. Chrysaphius let him know that it was a present of a very different kind that was expected from him. St. Flavian, an enemy to simony, answered resolutely that the revenues, and treasure of the church were designed for other uses, namely, the honour of God and the relief of his poor. The eunuch, highly provoked at the bishop's refusal, from that moment resolved to contrive his ruin. Wherefore, with a view to his expulsion, he persuaded the emperor, by the means of his wife Eudoxia, to order the bishop to make Pulcheria, sister to Theodosius, a deaconess of his church. The saint's refusal was a second offence in the eyes of the sycophants of the court. The next year Chrysaphius

was still more grievously offended with our saint for his condemning the errors of his kinsman Eutyches, abbot of a monastery of three hundred monks, near the city, who had acquired a reputation for virtue, but in effect was no better than an ignorant, proud, and obstinate man. His intemperate zeal against Nestorius, for asserting two distinct persons in Christ, threw him into the opposite error, that of denying two distinct natures after the incarnation.

In a council, held by St. Flavian, in 448, Eutyches was accused of this error by Eusebius of Dorylæum, his former friend, and it was there condemned as heretical, and the author was cited to appear to give an account of his faith. On the day appointed in the last summons he appeared before the council, but attended by two of the principal officers of the court, and a troop of the imperial guards. Being admitted and interrogated on the point in question, that is, his faith concerning the incarnation; he declared that he acknowledged indeed two natures before the union, but after it only one. To all reasonings and authority produced against his tenet, his reply was, that he did not come thither to dispute, but to satisfy the assembly what his faith was. The council, upon this, anathematized and deposed him, and St. Flavian pronounced the sentence, which was subscribed by thirty-two bishops and twenty-three abbots, of which last, eighteen were priests. Eutyches said privately to his guards, that he appealed to the bishops of Rome, Egypt, and Jerusalem; and in a letter he wrote to St. Leo to complain of his usage in the council, he endeavoured to impose on the pope. But his Holiness being informed of the state of the affair by St. Flavian, wrote to him an ample declaration of the orthodox faith upon the point, which was afterwards read, and inserted in the acts of the council of Chalcedon, in which the errors of Eutyches were solemnly condemned. Chrysaphius, however, had interest enough with the weak emperor to obtain an order for a re-examination of the cause between St. Flavian and Eutyches in another council. This met in April, 449, consisting of about thirty bishops, one third whereof had assisted at the late council. St. Flavian being looked on as a party, Thalassius, bishop of Cæsarea, presided in his room. After the strictest scrutiny in every particular, the impiety of Eutyches, and the justice of our saint's proceedings, clearly appeared. St. Flavian presented to the emperor a profession of his faith, wherein he condemned the

errors of both Eutyches and Nestorius, his adversaries pretending that he favoured the latter.

Chrysaphius, though baffled in his attempts, was still bent on the ruin of the holy bishop, and employed all his craft and power to save Eutyches and destroy Flavian. With this view he wrote to Dioscorus, a man of a violent temper, who had succeeded St. Cyril in the patriarchal see of Alexandria, promising him his friendship and favour in all his designs, if he would undertake the defence of the deposed abbot against Flavian and Eusebius. Dioscorus came into his measures; and, by their joint interest with the empress Eudoxia, glad of an opportunity to mortify Pulcheria, who had a high esteem for our saint, they prevailed with the emperor to order a council to be called at Ephesus, to determine the dispute. Dioscorus was invited by the emperor to come and preside in it, accompanied with ten metropolitans and other bishops, together with the archimandrite, or abbot Barsumas, a man strongly attached to Eutyches and Dioscorus. The like directions were sent to the other patriarchs. St. Leo, who was invited, though late, sent as legates to act in his name, Julius, bishop of Puteoli, Renatus, a priest, who died on the road, Hilarius, a deacon, and Dulcitius, a notary. He sent by them a learned letter to St. Flavian, in which he taxes the ignorance of Eutyches in the holy scriptures, and explains the Catholic doctrine against that heresiarch, which he also did by other letters.

The false council of Ephesus, for the violences therein used commonly called the Latrocinale, was opened on the 8th of August, in 449, and consisted of one hundred and thirty bishops, or their deputies, from Egypt and the East. Eutyches was there, and two officers from the emperor with a great number of soldiers. Everything was carried on, by violence and open faction, in favour of Eutyches, by those officers and bishops who had espoused his party and formed a cabal. The pope's legates were never suffered to read his letters to the council. The final result of the proceedings was, to pronounce sentence of deposition against St. Flavian and Eusebius. The pope's legates protested against the sentence. Hilarius, the deacon, cried out aloud, "contradicitur," opposition is made; which Latin word was inserted in the Greek acts of the synod. And Dioscorus no sooner began to read the sentence, but he was interrupted by several of the bishops, who, prostrating themselves before him,

besought him in the most submissive terms, to proceed no further in so unwarrantable an affair. Upon this he starts up, and calls aloud for the imperial commissioners, Elpidius and Eulogius, who, without more ado, ordered the church doors to be set open; upon which Proclus, the proconsul of Asia, entered, surrounded with a band of soldiers, and followed by a confused multitude with chains, clubs, and swords. This struck such a terror into the whole assembly, that when the bishops were required by Dioscorus and his creatures to subscribe, few or none had the courage to withstand his threats, the pope's legates excepted, who protested aloud against these violent proceedings; one of whom was imprisoned; the other, Hilarius, got off with much difficulty, and came safe to Rome. St. Flavian, on hearing the sentence read by Dioscorus, appealed from him to the holy see, and delivered his acts of appeal in writing to the pope's legates, then present. This so provoked Dioscorus,(1) that, together with Barsumas and others of their party,(2) after throwing the holy bishop on the ground, they so kicked and bruised him, that he died within a few days, in 449, not at Ephesus, as some have said by mistake, but in his exile at Epipus, two days' journey from that city, situated near Sardes, in Lydia, as Marcellinus testifies in his chronicle.

The council being over, Dioscorus, with two of his Egyptian bishops had the insolence to excommunicate St. Leo. But violence and injustice did not triumph long; for the emperor's eyes being opened on his sister Pulcheria's return to court, whom the ambition of Chrysaphius had found means to remove in the beginning of these disturbances, the enuch was disgraced, and soon after put to death; and the empress Eudoxia obliged to retire to Jerusalem. The next year the emperor died, as Cedrenus says, penitent; and Pulcheria, ascending the throne in 450, ordered Saint Flavian's body to be brought with great honour to Constantinople, and there magnificently interred, among his predecessors, in that see. St. Leo had, upon the first news of these proceedings, written to him to comfort him, as also to Theodosius, Pulcheria, and the clergy of Constantinople in his defence. The general council of Chalcedon declared him a saint and martyr, and paid great honours to his memory, in 451. The same council honourably restored Eusebius of Dorylæum to his see. Pope Hilarius, who had been St. Leo's legate at

(1) *Evag.* l. xi. c. 11.(2) *Conc. Chalced. act.* 4.

Ephesus, had so great a veneration for the saint, that he caused his martyrdom to be represented in Mosaic work, in the church which he built in honour of the holy Cross. The wicked Dioscorus was condemned by the council of Chalcedon, in 451, and died obstinate and impenitent, in the Eutychian heresy, and his other crimes, in his banishment at Gangres, in 454.

It was the glory of St. Flavian to die a martyr of the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God. This is the fundamental article of the Christian religion, and, above all other mysteries, challenges our most profound homage and constant devotion. In it hath God displayed, in the most incomprehensible manner, the astonishing immensity of his power, mercy, wisdom, and love, the contemplation of which will be the sweet occupation of angels and saints to all eternity. The servants of God on earth find their greatest delight in meditating on this great mystery, and in profound adoration and transports of love, honouring, praising, and glorifying their divine Saviour, and studying to put on his spirit by the constant union in mind and heart, or of their thoughts and affections, with him. Is it possible that we who believe in this God, who annihilated himself, and died for us most miserable and ungrateful sinners, should not die of love for him? At least, how is it possible we should not always have him present to our minds, and prostrate ourselves at his feet a thousand times a-day to return him our most humble thanks, and to pay him the homage of our adoration, love, and praise? The more he is insulted in this mystery of goodness itself, by the blasphemies of unbelievers and heretics, the greater ought to be our zeal and fervour in honouring it. But as the incarnation is the mystery of the unfathomed humility of a God to heal the wound of our pride, it is only by humility, and the annihilation of creatures in our hearts, that we can be disposed to contemplate or honour it with fruit. The dreadful fall and impenitence of Eutyches, after he had renounced the world with a view to give himself to God, were owing to the fatal sin of a secret pride.

SS. THEODULUS AND JULIAN, MM.

THEY suffered at Cæsarea in Palestine, at the same time with those mentioned yesterday, but are named on this day in the Roman Martyrology. Theodulus was an old man of eminent virtue and wisdom, who enjoyed one of the most honourable