

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

it by an edict called *Ecthesis*, or the *Exposition*, declaring that there is only one will in Christ, namely, that of the Divine Word: which was condemned by Pope John IV. Cyrus, bishop of Phasis, a virulent Monothelite, was by Heraclius preferred to the patriarchate of Alexandria, in 629. St. Sophronius, falling at his feet conjured him not to publish his erroneous articles; but in vain. He therefore left Egypt, and came to Constantinople, where he found Sergius, the crafty patriarch, sowing the same error in conjunction with Theodorus of Pharan. Hereupon he travelled into Syria, where, in 634, he was, against his will, elected patriarch of Jerusalem.

He was no sooner established in this see, than he assembled a council of all the bishops of his patriarchate, in 634, to condemn the Monothelite heresy, and composed a synodal letter to explain and prove the Catholic faith. This excellent piece was confirmed in the sixth general council. St. Sophronius sent this learned epistle to Pope Honorius and to Sergius. This latter had, by a crafty letter and captious expressions, persuaded Pope Honorius to tolerate a silence as to one or two wills in Christ. It is evident from the most authentic monuments, that Honorius never assented to that error, but always adhered to the truth. (1) However, a silence was ill-timed, and though not so designed, might be deemed by some a kind of connivance; for a rising heresy seeks to carry on its work under ground without noise: it is a fire which spreads itself under cover. Sophronius seeing the emperor and almost all the chief prelates of the East conspire against the truth, thought it his duty to defend it with the greater zeal. He took Stephen, bishop of Doria, the eldest of his suffragans, led him to Mount Calvary, and there abjured him by Him who was crucified on that place, and by the account which he should give him at the last day, "to go to the apostolic see, where are the foundations of the holy doctrine, and not to cease to pray till the holy persons there should examine and condemn the novelty." Stephen did so, and staid at Rome ten years, till he saw it condemned by Pope Martin I. in the council of Lateran, in 649. Sophronius was detained at home by the invasion of the Saracens. Mahomet had broached his impostures at Mecca, in 608, but being rejected there, fled to Medina, in 622. Aoubeker succeeded him in 634, under the title of Caliph, or

(1) See Nat. Alexander, Sæc. 7. Wittasse and Tournely Tr. de Incar.

vicar of the prophet. He died after a reign of two years. Omar, his successor, took Damascus in 636, and after a siege of two years, Jerusalem, in 638. He built a mosque in the place of Solomon's temple, and because it fell in the night, the Jews told him it would not stand unless the cross of Christ, which stood on Mount Calvary, was taken away: which the Caliph caused to be done. (1) Sophronius, in a sermon on the exaltation of the cross, mentions the custom of taking the cross out of its case at Mid-Lent to be venerated. (2) Photius takes notice that his works breathe an affecting piety, but that the Greek is not pure. They consist of his synodal letter, his letter to Pope Honorius, and a small number of scattered sermons. He deplored the abomination of desolation set up by the Mahometans in the holy place. God called him out of those evils to his kingdom on the 11th of March, 639, or as Papebroke thinks, (3) in 644. See the council of Lateran, t. 6. Conc. Fleury, b. 37, 38. and Le Quien, Oriens Christ. t. 3. p. 264.

• ST. ÆNGUS, B. C.

THIS saint is distinguished by the surname of Kele De, that is Worshipper of God; which began in his time to be the denomination of monks in the Scottish language, commonly called Culdees. He was born in Ireland in the eight century, of the race of the Dalaradians, kings of Ulster. In his youth renouncing all earthly pretensions, he chose Christ for his inheritance, embracing a religious state in the famous monastery of Cluain-Edneach in East Meath. Here he became so great a proficient both in learning and sanctity, that no one in his time could be found in Ireland that equalled him in reputation for every kind of virtue, and for sacred knowledge. To shun the esteem of the world, he disguised himself, and going to the monastery of Tamhlacht, three miles from Dublin, lived there seven years unknown, in the quality of a lay-brother, performing all the drudgery of the house, appearing fit for nothing but the vilest

(1) Theophanes, p. 284.

(2) In medio jejunii, adorationis gratiâ, proponi solet vitale lignum venerandæ crucis. Sophr. Sermon. in Exalt. Crucis. Bibl. Patr. t. 12. p. 214. et apud Gretser, t. 2. de Cruce, p. 88.

(3) Papebr. Tr. prælim. ad t. 3. Maii, n. 144. p. 32.