

by St. Irenæus and other fathers. St. Vincent died in the reigns of Theodosius II. and Valentinian III, consequently before the close of the year 450.¹ His relics are preserved with respect at Lerins, and his name occurs in the Roman Martyrology.

St. Vincent observes² that souls which have lost the anchorage of the Catholic faith, "are tossed and shattered with inward storms of clashing thoughts, that by this restless posture of mind they may be made sensible of their danger; and taking down the sails of pride and vanity which they have unhappily spread before every gust of heresy, they may make all the sail they can into the safe and peaceful harbour of their holy mother the Catholic Church; and being sick from a surfeit of errors, may there discharge those foul and bitter waters to make room for the pure waters of life. There they may unlearn well what they have learned ill; may get a right notion of all those doctrines of the Church they are capable of understanding, and believe those that surpass all understanding.

SS. DONATIAN AND ROGATIAN, MM.

THERE lived at Nantes an illustrious young nobleman called Donatian, who having received the holy sacrament of regeneration, led a most edifying life, and laid himself out with much zeal in converting others to faith in Christ. His elder brother Rogatian was not able to resist the moving example of his piety, and the force of his

¹ The Vincentian objections against the doctrine of St. Austin could not come from the pen of St. Vincent, who condemns with great warmth Pelagius and his followers over and over again, and highly extols the letter of Celestine to the bishops of Gaul; in which that pope reprehends their neglect of watchfulness, and duty in suffering the profane novelties of Semi-pelagianism to spring up and grow among them. We find two other Vincents living at Marseilles at that very time, and there might be others of the same name; one of whom might be a Semi-Pelagian.

discourses, and desired to be baptised. But the bishop having withdrawn and concealed himself for fear of the persecution, he was not able to receive that sacrament, but was shortly after baptised in his blood. For he declared himself a Christian at a time when to embrace that sacred profession was to become a candidate for martyrdom. The emperor Maximian sent an order to the prefect, directing him to put to death all who refused to sacrifice to Jupiter and Apollo. This must have happened when that emperor was in Gaul occupied in his expedition either against the Bagaudæ in 286, or against Carausius, who having assumed the purple in Britain maintained himself in that usurped dignity seven years. The acts of these martyrs attribute this order to the emperors Dioclesian and Maximian, but we find it usual to ascribe to both those emperors the decrees of one. The prefect to whom it was addressed seems to have been the cruel persecutor Rictius Varus, prefect of the Belgic, and probably also of the Celtic Gaul. The title of president which the acts give him, only belonged to a governor who had power of life and death. The prefect arriving at Nantes, Donatian was impeached before him for professing himself a Christian, and for having withdrawn others, particularly his brother, from the worship of the gods. Donatian was therefore apprehended, and having boldly confessed Christ before the governor, was cast into prison and loaded with irons. Rogatian was also brought before the prefect, who endeavoured first to gain him by flattering speeches, but finding him inflexible, sent him to prison with his brother. Rogatian grieved that he had not been able to receive the sacrament of baptism, and prayed that the kiss of peace which his brother gave him might supply it. Donatian also prayed for him that his faith might procure him the effect of baptism, and the effusion of his blood that of the

sacrament of chrism, that is, of confirmation. They passed that night together in fervent prayer. They were the next day called for again by the prefect, to whom they declared that they were ready to suffer for the name of Christ whatever torments were prepared for them. By the order of the inhuman judge they were first stretched on the rack, afterward their heads were pierced with lances, and lastly cut off, about the year 287.¹

1 The martyrdom of these saints cannot be placed in the great persecution in 303, as some have imagined. On the 1st of March, 291, Constantius Chlorus and C. Galerius-Valerius-Maximianus were created Cæsars; the latter had Italy for his portion of the empire, and the former Gaul beyond the Alps and Britain. Constantius died at York on the 25th of July, 306. We are assured by Lactantius, (*de Morte Persecut.* c. 15 and 16.) Eusebius, (*Vit. Constant.* c. 13, 15, 16, and 17,) and St. Optatus, (*l. 1. de Schism. Donat.*) &c. that Constantius never suffered any one to be put to death for the Christian religion. It is therefore clear that the martyrs who suffered in Gaul and Britain under Dioclesian and Maximian ought to be placed in the beginning of their reign; such as Gereon and his companions at Cologne; Cassius, Florentius, Victor, and some others in the same place: Justus at Paris, Fuscian and Victorius at Amiens, Piat at Tournay, Lucian at Beauvais, Quintin at Peronne, Crispin and Crispinian at Soissons, &c. before the year 291. After Maximian Hercules had martyred the Thebæan Legion, he sent Rictius Varus, prefect into the Belgic and Celtic Gaul, who at Triers, St. Quintin's, Basil, Amiens, &c. exercised unheard-of cruelties against the Christians from 286 to his death in 288. His successor Julian put to death St. Yon in the province of Lyons, and St. Lucian at Beauvais. Eutychius and Austerius, mentioned in the trial of St. Victor at Marseilles, seem also to have been prefects of the prætorium in Gaul, and perhaps succeeded Julian in 290 or 291. As for Sicinnius Fescenninus who put to death St. Dionysius of Paris, and St. Nicasius in the Vexin, he seems to have been governor of the second province of Lyons, which was then extended farther northwards than in later ages. SS. Fides and Caprais suffered at Agen under a judge named Dacian. St. Alban, &c. seem to have been crowned in Britain before Carausius assumed the purple in 287. Eusebius (*l. 8. c. 1. et 4.*) in describing the peace which the church enjoyed before the great persecution, is chiefly to be understood of the East. For it is clear that not only Maximian but Dioclesian also, when he came to Rome in the first year of his reign, persecuted the Christians, probably out of complaisance to the Romans. Prisca, wife to Dioclesian, and his daughter Valeria who was married to Maximian Galerius, were very favourable to the Christian religion, and seem both to have embraced it. (See Lactant. *de Mort. Persec.* c. 15.) For in 303 they refused to be defiled with sacrifices till compelled for fear of torments. This they probably learned from Lucian, chamberlain to Dioclesian, a zealous Christian, to whom St. Theonas, who governed the see of Alexandria from 288 to 300, sent an excellent instruction, extant in D'Acheri's *Spicilegium*, t. 12. p. 545. The empress was not a Christian when it was wrote. Lucian seems to have died before the great persecution in 303, in which Doro-

Their bodies were buried near the place where they suffered. The Christians some time after built them a sepulchre, at the foot of which the bishops of Nantes chose their burial-place. Towards the close of the fifth century, the Christians built a church upon the place, which has been successively in the hands of monks and canons, and is at present parochial. The bodies of these two martyrs in 1145 were translated by Albert bishop of Ostia to the cathedral, where they remain in great veneration. See their authentic acts, though they seem only to have been wrote in the fifth century, in Ruinart, *Act. Sincer.* p. 279. Tillemont, t. 4. p. 491. Ceillier, t. 3. p. 362. Lobineau, *Vies des Saints de la Bretagne*, p. 2.

ST. JOHN DE PRADO, PRIEST, M.

HE was a native of the kingdom of Leon, in Spain, and embraced in his own country the austere Order of the Bare-footed Observatin Franciscans. Being sent by the authority of the Congregation de Propagandâ Fide to preach the faith in the kingdoms of Fez and Morocco, he discharged himself with so great zeal that the Mahometans cast him into a dungeon loaded with chains. The holy confessor suffered with constancy and joy most cruel scourgings and other inhuman torments, and consummated his martyrdom by fire on the 24th of May, on which his name is inserted in the Franciscan Martyrology, by order of Benedict XIV. He was solemnly beatified by Benedict XIII. in 1728.

See that pope's Bull, t. 10. Bullar. part. 4. p. 333.

theus, Gorgonius, and other officers of the palace were crowned with martyrdom. And Dorotheus is said in his acts (26th December) to have then been chamberlain. This note answers the objections which some critics have raised against the history of so many martyrs who suffered in the West about the beginning of Dioclesian's reign; when it is certain that the persecution of Carinus was still carried on in several governments. The governors were always enraged against the Christians, under a pretext that the edicts against them had not been revoked. See Tillemont, *Mém de l'Histoire de l'Eglise*, t. 5. p. 3.