

ST. VICTORINUS, B. M.

ST. JEROM styles this father one of the pillars of the Church, and tells us, that his works were sublime in sense, though the Latin style was low, the author being by birth a Grecian. He professed oratory, probably in some city of Greece; but, considering the vanity of all earthly pursuits, consecrated both his learning and labours wholly to the advancement of virtue and religion, and was made a bishop of Pettau, in Upper Pannonia, now in Stiria. This father wrote against most heresies of that age, and comments on a great part of the holy scriptures; but all his works are lost except a little treatise on the creation of the world, published by Cave,¹ from a Lambeth manuscript: and a treatise on the Apocalypse, extant in the library of the fathers, though not entire. St. Victorinus flourished in 290, and died a martyr, as St. Jerom testifies, probably in 304.

ST. MARCIAN, ANCHORET, C.

THE city of Cyrus, in Syria, was the birthplace of St. Marcian; his father was of a patrician family, and enjoyed several honourable posts in the empire. Marcian himself was educated at the court; but, in the flower of his age, took a resolution to renounce the world, in which he saw nothing but emptiness, folly, and snares. He considered that those who seem blessed with the greatest share of worldly enjoyments are strangers to true happiness, and by flying from object to object, and relieving the disappointment of success in one by the novelty of some other pursuit, as incapable of satisfying their hearts, or giving them true contentment or rest as the

¹ Hist. Liter. t. I. p. 148.

former, justify their levity and inconstancy by proclaiming the falsehood of all their boasted enjoyments; but, at the same time, condemn their erroneous and dangerous choice, in seeking happiness where they are sure to find only affliction of spirit, and bitterness of heart, and generally the loss of their virtue. He therefore said to himself, with the royal prophet; *Be converted, my soul, into thy rest.* Seek thy happiness in God thy centre: by the mastery over thy own passions settle a lasting calm and peace within thyself, or thy domestic kingdom, and establish in thy heart the reign of divine love and grace. Animated with this noble and truly heroic desire, he forsook his friends and country, and that he might not do things by halves, took his measures that he might entirely both forget and be forgotten by the world. He retired secretly into the desert of Chalcis, in Syria, upon the borders of Arabia, and chose in it the most remote and secret part. Here he shut himself up in a small enclosure, which he never went out of, and in the midst of which he built himself a cell so narrow and low, that he could neither stand nor lie in it without bending his body. This solitude was to him a paradise, and he had in it no communication but with heaven. His whole employment was to sing psalms, read, pray, and work. Bread was all his subsistence, and this in a small quantity, that he might be always hungry: but he never fasted above a day without taking some food, lest he should not have strength to do what God required of him. He received such a gift of sublime contemplation that, in this exercise, days seemed to him hours, and hours scarce more than minutes. The supernatural light which he received in his secret communications with heaven, gave him a feeling knowledge of the great truth and mysteries of faith; and God poured down his sweetest consolations, as it were, in torrents into the

heart of his servant, which was filled with him alone.

Notwithstanding the saint's care to live unknown to men, the reputation of his sanctity discovered him, and he was prevailed upon to admit first two disciples, Eusebius and Agapetus, who lived in a cell near his, sang psalms with him in the day, and had frequent spiritual conferences with him. He afterward suffered a numerous monastery to be erected near his enclosure, appointed Eusebius abbot, and himself gave the plan of the institute, and frequent instructions to the monks who resorted to him. Once St. Flavian, patriarch of Antioch, Acacius of Beroëa, Isidore of Cyrus, Eusebius of Chalcis, and Theodorus of Hieropolis, at that time the most renowned bishops in Syria, with the chief officers and magistrates of the country, paid him a visit together, and standing before the door of his cell, begged he would give them some spiritual instructions according to his custom. The dignity of this numerous company alarmed his humility, and he stood some time silent. Being importuned to speak, he said sighing: "Alas! God speaks to us every day by his creatures, and this universe which we behold: he speaks to us by his gospel; he teaches us what we ought to do both for ourselves and others. He terrifies and he encourages us. Yet we make no advantage of all these lessons. What can Marcian say that can be of use, who does not improve himself by all these excellent instructions?" The bishops proposed among themselves to ordain him priest; but perceiving how grievous a mortification this suggestion was to his humility, they dropped the design, to his great joy. Several miracles which the saint wrought increased the veneration which every one had for his sanctity; and several built chapels in different places in hopes to procure his body to bury it in one of them after his

death. This gave him extreme trouble, and he made his two disciples promise to bury his body in some unknown secret place. He died about the year 387; and they did as he had enjoined them. His grave was discovered soon after, and his body, with great solemnity, removed and put into a stone coffin. His tomb became a place of great devotion, and famed for miracles.

See Theodoret's Philothea, or Religious History, c. 2. and the Roman Martyrology on this day.

ST. VULGAN, C.

TITULAR SAINT OF THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH, AND
PATRON OF THE TOWN OF LENS, IN ARTOIS.

HE was an Irishman, (or, according to his manuscript life kept at Lens, an Englishman or Briton,) who preached the faith some time in those parts, and died in a cell not far from the abbey of St. Vedast at Arras, soon after it was erected in the seventh century. Colgan calls him a bishop, and places his death about the beginning of the eighth century.

NOVEMBER 111.

SAINT MALACHY, CONFESSOR,

ARCHBISHOP OF ARDMACH OR ARMAGH.

From St. Bernard's Life, l. 4. c. 4. and the Life of St. Malachy, written by St. Bernard himself, partly from his own knowledge, and partly from relations sent him from Ireland by the abbot Congan, t. 2. p. 663. ad p. 698. ed. Mabill.

A. D. 1148.

IN the fifth century Ireland was converted from heathenism to Christianity. Through the