

there wonderful fruit. He preached almost every day, and his sermons were always signalized by remarkable conversions. His exhortations, whether in the confessional or in giving catechism, were always such as reached to the heart, and left lasting salutary impressions on those who heard him. What time could be spared from those charitable functions, he spent in prayer and contemplation. He was favoured with visions, and wrought several miraculous cures. For the exercise of his virtue he was long afflicted with divers painful distempers. His holy death happened on September the 10th, in 1306, and he was canonized by Eugenius IV. in 1446. His body was buried in the church of his convent at Tolentino, in a chapel in which he used to say mass, and his tomb there is held in veneration.

The saints, how much soever they had subdued their passions, and strengthened themselves in habits of all virtues, always watched with extraordinary vigilance over all their words and actions, and every motion of their hearts, knowing this life to be a state of perpetual warfare and danger. To prevent all attacks from the enemy, it is the duty of a Christian to be always provided, and in time of peace to expect his return: this disposition will contribute to keep him at a distance; and a neglect of it will certainly invite him to take advantage of our supine sloth, and, by subtle stratagems, or by open force, easily to overthrow us at unawares. By frequent self-examination, the practice of self-denial, the dispositions of humble fear and compunction, and by watchfulness against all occasions of danger, we must continually be armed, and ready to repulse him: if we leave the avenues of our soul open or unguarded, and trust him within our gates, he enters smoothly, but, like a cancer, brings death.

ST. PULCHERIA, V., EMPRESS.

From Sozomen, l. 9; Theodorus Lector, the Paschal Chronicle of Alexandria, &c. See amongst the moderns, Tillemont, t. 15, and especially Orsi. Stilling the Bollandist, t. 3, Sept. p. 504. Pinus the Bollandist, ib. t. 5, p. 778, in an Appendix, and Benedict XIV.'s Bull to grant an office in her honour to several Congregations of Regular Canons, to the Jesuits, &c. an. 1752.

A. D. 453.

In this incomparable princess virtue shone forth on the impe-

rial throne in the brightest lustre, and showed itself equally happy in itself, and equally invincible in the trials of adversity, and those (which are usually more dangerous) of flattering prosperity. The Empress Pulcheria was granddaughter to Theodosius the Great, and daughter to Arcadius, emperor of the East, and his wife, Eudoxia. She was born in 399, and had three sisters. Flaccilla, who was the eldest, but died soon, and Arcadia and Marina, who were younger than Pulcheria. Arcadius was a weak prince, always governed by his wife and his eunuchs; he reigned thirteen years and three months from the death of his father, Theodosius, and died on the 1st of May, in the year 408, having lived thirty-one years and some months. He left a son eight years old, and appointed for his minister and tutor Anthemius, one of the wisest men in the empire, who had been a constant friend to St. Aphraates and St. Chrysostom. St. Pulcheria was only five years old when she lost her mother, and nine when she lost her father; but for her prudence and piety she was, from her infancy, the miracle of the world. On the 14th of July, in 414, though only fifteen years of age, she was declared, in the name of her young brother, Augusta and partner with him in the imperial dignity, and charged with the care of his instruction, though but two years older than him. Her wisdom, capacity, and sedateness, in which she far exceeded any of her age, supplied her want of experience. To cultivate her brother's mind, and give him an education suitable to his rank, she placed about him the most learned and virtuous masters, and made it her first concern to instil into him sentiments of religion and piety, being sensible that all other qualifications are useless and often dangerous when not guided by these principles. She taught him to pray with great devotion, to love the places of divine worship, and to have a great zeal for the Catholic church and its holy doctrine. Whatever was valuable in that prince was, under God, owing to Pulcheria, and if she did not make him greater, all agree that nothing was wanting on her side. She also took care of the education of her two surviving sisters, who, to the end of their lives, endeavoured to tread in her steps.

Out of a motive of perfect virtue (not out of views of prudent

policy lest suitors for marriage should embroil the state), at fifteen years of age she made a public vow of virginity, and induced her sisters to do the same. They had a share in all her employments except those that regarded the state; they ate together, were united in all acts of devotion and charity, and what time was not devoted to exercises of piety, and to useful studies, they employed in working tapestry or embroidery. Pulcheria only absented herself when she was obliged to attend upon business of the state, finding a solitude in the palace itself. The penitential austerities which she practised, were such as seemed rather to suit a recluse than one who lived in a court. Men were denied entrance in hers and her sisters' apartments for avoiding the least suspicion or shadow of danger; and she never saw or spoke to any man but in public places. The imperial palace, under her direction, was as regular as a monastery. Upon all emergencies, in imitation of Moses, she consulted heaven by devout prayer; then listened to the advice of able counsellors before she took any resolution in matters of weight. The imperial council was, through her discernment, composed of the wisest, most virtuous, and most experienced persons in the empire; yet, in deliberations, all of them readily acknowledged the superiority of her judgment and penetration. Her resolutions were the result of the most mature consideration, and she took care herself that all orders should be executed with incredible expedition, though always in the name of her brother, to whom she gave the honour and reputation of all she did. She was herself well skilled in the Greek and Latin tongues, in history and other useful branches of literature; and was, as every one must be who is endowed with greatness of soul, and a just idea of the dignity of the human mind, the declared patroness of the sciences, and of both the useful and polite arts. Far from making religion subservient to policy, all her views and projects were regulated by that virtue; and by this the happiness of her government was complete. She prevented by her prudence all revolts which ambition, jealousy, or envy might stir up to disturb the tranquillity of the church or state; she cemented a firm peace with all neighbouring powers, and abolished the wretched remains of idolatry in several parts. Never did virtue reign in the Oriental empire with

greater lustre, never was the state more happy or more flourishing, nor was its name ever more respected even among the barbarians, than whilst the reins of the government were in the hands of Pulcheria.

Theodosius was twenty years old when it was thought proper for him to marry, and by the advice of Pulcheria, he pitched upon Athenais, the daughter of an Athenian philosopher, who had given her an excellent education, but had disinherited her. She came to court to procure his will to be made void on that account, and, by her beauty, genius, and uncommon accomplishments, raised the admiration of every one, insomuch that the emperor judged her most worthy to be made his consort. She was first baptized, for she had been brought up an idolater. Her name Athenais being derived from Athena or Minerva, she changed it into that of Eudocia, and Theodosius was married to her on the 7th of June, 421. Two years after, in 423, he declared her Augusta. This marriage made no alteration in the state, the chief administration being still intrusted to Pulcheria, till the eunuch Chrysaphius, a great favourite with the emperor, prepossessed Eudocia against her, who had been long mortified at the great sway her sister had in the government. In 431 Nestorius was condemned in the council of Ephesus. Chrysaphius and Eudocia were indefatigable in their intrigues and practices to ruin Pulcheria; and the emperor, (whose misfortune was supine indolence, and weakness of understanding,) after having been long deaf to their insinuations, at length was so far worked upon as to give heartily into all that they said against her. Upon their suggestion he sent an order to St. Flavian, bishop of Constantinople, to make her a deaconness of his church. The good prelate waited on the emperor, and urged cogent reasons against the proposal. Finding the prince resolutely bent on the thing, he went home, promising to return to court at an appointed time; but he first sent a private message to Pulcheria, desiring her to take care to be out of the way. The princess understood by this hint the contrivance of her enemies, and retired to a country seat in the plains of Hebdomon, with a resolution of spending the remainder of her days in silence and holy retirement. This happened in the year 447. The consequences of this removal were most unhappy both to

the emperor and to the state and church; for the eunuch and empress, out of revenge, persecuted St. Flavian, patronised Eutyches, the heresiarch, whom he had condemned, and supported Dioscorus and other Eutychians in the most outrageous acts of fury and violence in the Latrocinale of Ephesus in 449 Theodosius himself was prevailed upon blindly to publish an edict, declaring an approbation of all these proceedings, and of the second council of Ephesus, as he styled the violent assembly of Dioscorus and the other furious heretics, usually called the Latrocinale, or assembly of robbers.

Pulcheria looked upon her retreat as a favour of heaven, and in it she consecrated all her time to God in prayer, contemplation, and the exercise of good works. She made no complaints of her brother's ingratitude, of the empress who owed every thing to her, or of their unjust ministers. Her desire was both to forget the world and to be forgotten by it, esteeming herself most happy in having no other business on her hands than that of conversing with God, and meditating on divine truths. Nothing could have drawn her from the pleasure she enjoyed in this sweet solitude but the dangers which threatened the church and state, and compassion for her brother, whose credulity was so basely abused. Seeing at length impiety and malice carried to the highest pitch, and pressed by the letters of the holy Pope St. Leo, she boldly went to court, and having procured admittance, spoke in such a manner to the emperor, that, upon the spot, he opened his eyes, saw the brink of the precipice to which he had been pushed by designing persons, disgraced Chrysaphius, banished him into an island, and caused him there to be put to death. The emperor was thus happily disabused of his errors a little before his death, which happened on the 29th of July, in the year 450, the forty-ninth of his age, and forty-first of his reign. His widow Eudocia retired into Palestine, where she ended her days.

St. Pulcheria, by the death of her brother, remained mistress of the Eastern empire. To strengthen her authority she chose a partner in the throne, who was an excellent general, a wise statesman, very zealous for the Catholic faith, exceedingly virtuous, and particularly charitable to the poor. His name was Marcian; he was a native of Illyricum. and a widower. By a

former marriage he had a daughter named Euphemia, who married Anthemius, afterwards emperor of the West. Pulcheria, judging it might be of great advantage to the state, and enhance Marcian's credit and authority, proposed to marry him, on condition she should be at full liberty to preserve her vow of virginity. Marcian readily embraced the proposal; and these two great souls governed together like two friends who had in all things the same views and sentiments, which all centered in the advancement of religion, piety, and the public weal. They received favourably, and with great joy, four legates sent by St. Leo the Great to Constantinople, and their zeal for the Catholic faith deserved the highest commendations of that pope, and of the general council of Chalcedon, which, under their protection, condemned the Eutychian heresy in 451. They did their utmost to have the decrees of this synod executed over all the East, but met with great difficulty in Egypt and Palestine, from the obstinacy of the Eutychians in those parts. St. Pulcheria wrote herself two letters, one to certain monks, another to an abbess of nuns, in Palestine, to convince them that the council of Chalcedon did not revive Nestorianism, but condemned that error together with the opposite heresy of Eutyches.(1)

This great empress built many churches, and among these, three in honour of the Blessed Virgin, namely, that of Blaguerna, that of Chalcopratum, and that of Hodegus,(2) In this last she placed a famous picture of the Blessed Virgin, which the empress Eudocia had sent her from Jerusalem, as the work of St. Luke the evangelist.(3) Historians assure us that volumes would be required to sum up all the churches, monasteries, and especially the hospitals which St. Pulcheria founded and richly endowed. After despatching public affairs her whole employment was to pray, read good books, visit and serve the poor with her own hands. Sozomen relates, that she was admonished by several visions to procure a solemn translation to be made of a considerable part of the relics of the forty martyrs, which she enclosed in a rich shrine. That historian, who

(1) Cone. Chalced. par. 3, l. et vit. S. Euthym. p. 67.

(2) Du Cange, Constant. l. 4, c. 5, n. 57, c. 2.

(3) Theodor. Lector, l. 1. initio, et p. 552.

was an eye-witness to this ceremony, makes mention of the extraordinary devotion with which the people applied cloths and handkerchiefs to these relics.⁽¹⁾ This good empress having been all her life the protectress of the church, and the tender mother of the poor, she at her death gave to these latter, by her will, all her goods or private estates, which were very considerable in different parts of the empire. If we consider her great actions and heroic virtues, we shall be persuaded that the great commendations which St. Proclus in his panegyric on her, St. Leo, and the general council of Chalcedon bestowed on this empress, were so far from being compliments or strains of eloquence, as to fall far short of her extraordinary merit, which no words can sufficiently celebrate. A little before her death she had finished the court of the church of St. Laurence, in her own palace, which was of most excellent workmanship. She passed from a temporal to an eternal crown in 453, on the 10th of September, being sixty-eight years and some months old. Marcian punctually executed her will in favour of the poor, and being enriched with the treasure of his devotion, almost boundless charities and good works, followed her to immortal bliss on the 26th of January, 457, aged threescore and five years, having reigned six and a half. His memory is blessed for his virtues, and for the great services he did religion. Leo, a native of Thrace, was chosen his successor in the empire. Both Latins and Greeks celebrate the feast of St. Pulcheria as of a holy virgin. The learned Pope Benedict XIV. expresses a singular veneration for her memory.

SS. NEMESIANUS, FELIX, LUCIUS, ANOTHER FELIX, LITTEUS, POLIANUS, VICTOR, JADER, AND DATIVUS, BISHOPS; WITH MANY PRIESTS, DEACONS, AND OTHER COMPANIONS, PART MARTYRS, PART CONFESSORS, IN NUMIDIA.

IN the first year of the eighth general persecution, raised by Valerian, St. Cyprian was banished by the proconsul of Carthage to Curubis. At the same time the president of Numidia,* pro-

(1) Sozom. l. 9, c. 2.

* A governor among the Romans inferior to a proconsul, but who had power of life and death, was styled a president. Such was the Roman