

and are now come to their senses, prove by their cure how effectual the intercession of martyrs is." He closes this sermon with a devout and confident address to the martyrs. See Photius, Biblioth. Cod. 271 ; St. Austerius's fourteen homilies, published by F. Combefis, in Auctar. Bibl. Patr. t. 1, p. 1, with extracts from several others in Photius, loc. cit. and seven homilies on the Psalms, published by Cotelier, Mon. Græc. vol. 2, p. 1 ; see also Tillem. t. 10 ; Du Pin, vol. 3, p. 53 ; Fabricius, Bibl. Gr. l. 5, c. 28, § 8, vol. 8, p. 607 ; Oudin, t. 1, p. 892 ; Ceillier, &c.

OCTOBER XXXI.

SAINT QUINTIN, MARTYR.

From his Acts in Surius, written in a good style, before St. Eligius's time, but later than Nestorius. The author assures us, that he compiled them from a history written by one who was present at the first translation of the martyr's relics, fifty-five years after his death. But the author has added certain circumstances from popular traditions, with a *fertur* : which are not of equal authority. Other Acts of St. Quintin, but of an inferior stamp, are given us by Claude Hemere, in his History of the Town of St. Quintin's. See Tillemont, t. 4, pp. 433, 436, 700.

A. D. 287

ST. QUINTIN was a Roman, descended of a senatorian family, and is called by his historian the son of Zeno. Full of zeal for the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and burning with a holy desire to make his powerful name and the mysteries of his love and mercy known among the infidels, he left his country, renounced all prospects of preferment, and, attended by St. Lucian of Beauvais, made his way to Gaul. They preached the faith together in that country till they reached Amiens, in Picardy, where they parted. Lucian went to Beauvais, and having sown the seeds of divine faith in the hearts of many, received the crown of martyrdom in that city. St. Quintin staid at Amiens, endeavouring by his prayers and labours to make that country a portion of our Lord's inheritance. Desiring nothing so earnestly as to destroy the kingdom of the devil, that the name of God might be glorified, he besought the Author of all good, without ceasing, that he would infuse his

saving knowledge and holy love into the souls of those to whom he announced the divine law. God made him equally powerful in words and works, and his discourses were authorized and strongly recommended by great numbers of miracles, and illustrated and enforced by a most holy and mortified life. The reward of his charitable labours was the crown of martyrdom, which he received in the beginning of the reign of Maximian Hercules, who was associated in the empire by Dioclesian, in the year 286. Maximian made Rictius Varus prefect of the prætorium; for though Augustus had appointed but one prætorian prefect to judge causes and receive appeals from all the provinces of the empire, in the reign of Dioclesian, each emperor appointed one, so that there were four prætorian prefects, according to the number of emperors who then reigned together; but Constantine the Great was the first who made this number regular, and determined the districts and jurisdiction of these supreme magistrates of the Roman empire. Rictius Varus, whose hatred of the Christian religion has stored the Martyrology with lists of many illustrious martyrs, seems to have resided at Triers, the metropolis of the Belgic Gaul; but, making a progress into the Second Gaul, when he was near Soissons, he had intelligence of the great progress the Christian faith had made at Amiens, and resolved to cut him off who was the author of this great change. When he arrived at Amiens, he ordered St. Quintin to be seized, thrown into prison, and loaded with chains. The next day the holy preacher was brought before the prefect, who assailed his constancy with promises and threats; and finding him proof against both, ordered him to be whipped unmercifully, and then confined to a close dungeon without the liberty of receiving either comfort or assistance from the faithful. In two other examinations before the same magistrate, his limbs were stretched with pulleys on the rack till his joints were dislocated; his body was torn with rods of iron wire; boiled pitch and oil were poured on his back, and lighted torches applied to his sides. The holy martyr, strengthened by Him whose cause he defended, remained superior to all the cruel arts of his barbarous persecutor, and preserved a perfect tranquillity of mind in the midst of such torments as filled the spectators with horror.

When Rictius Varus left Amiens, he commanded Quintin to be conducted to the territory of the Veromandui, whither he was directing his course in his return. The capital of that country was called Augusta Veromanduorum. In this city of the Veromandui the prefect made fresh attacks upon the champion of Christ, with threats and promises; and being ashamed to see himself vanquished by his courage and virtue, caused his body to be pierced with two iron wires from the neck to the thighs, and iron nails to be struck under his nails, and in his flesh in many places, particularly into his scull; and, lastly, his head to be cut off. This was executed on the 31st of October, in 287. The martyr's body was watched by the soldiers till night, and then thrown into the river Somme; but it was recovered by the Christians some days after, and buried on a mountain near the town; fifty-five years after, it was discovered by Eusebia, a devout lady; and a certain blind woman recovered her sight by the sacred relics.(1) The knowledge of the place was again lost in the persecution of Julian the Apostate, though a chapel which was built near it remained, when in the beginning of the year 641, St. Eligius, bishop of Noyon and the Vermandois, caused the holy relics to be sought; and when they were discovered, together with the great nails with which the body had been pierced, he distributed these nails, the teeth, and hair, in other places, and inclosed the rest of the sacred treasure in a rich shrine of his own work, which he placed behind the high altar, as St. Owen relates in his life. A new stately church of St. Quintin was built in the reign of Lewis Debonnaire, and another translation of the relics was made on the 25th of October, 825.(2) They were removed to Laon for fear of the Normans, but brought back on the 30th of October, 885, and are still kept in the great church, which was in the hands of monks from the time of Ebertran, the first abbot, till these were afterwards dispersed by the inroads of the Normans. In the following age, secular canons were put in possession of this famous church. Another church was built here in the honour of St. Quintin, in the place where his body had been concealed during fifty-five years, in an island in a

(1) Act. Mart. et St. Greg. Turon. de Gl. Mart. c. 73.

(2) Hemerè, Hist. Aug. Verom. l. 2, pp. 72, 79.

marsh formed by the river Somme. It became a famous monastery, now in the hands of the Benedictin monks of St. Maur: it is called St. Quintin's in the Island. St. Quintin's on the Mountain, a mile from Peronne, is another monastery of the same congregation, founded by Eilbert, brother to Herbert, count of Vermandois, in the seventh century. From the time of the translation of the martyr's relics in the reign of Lewis le Debonnaire, the town has taken the name of St. Quintin's.*

Martyrdom, when we are called to it, is an homage we owe to God, and a debt due to faith and religion. Happy are they whom God, by a *special grace*, allows to seal their fidelity to him by their blood! How great is the honour and happiness for a poor mortal man, and a poor sinner, to lay down his mean, miserable life for Him, who, out of infinite love for us, gave his most precious life! Martyrs are holocausts offered to the divine love and glory. They are witnesses, as the word imports in the original Greek, *bearing testimony* to the infinite power and goodness of God, in which they place an entire confidence, and to the truth of his holy revealed faith, which they confirm with their blood. No testimony can be more authentic, more glorious to God, more edifying to the faithful, or more convincing to infidels. It is by the constancy of martyrs that our holy religion is established. God was pleased to choose it for one of the means by which he would accomplish this great work. Are we witnesses to God and his holy religion, at least by lives of self-denial, meekness, and sanctity? Or do we not rather by a contrary deportment disgrace his holy church, of which we have the honour to be members, and expose his adorable name to the blasphemies of infidels.

ST. WOLFGANG, BISHOP OF RATISBON.

RADERUS derives this saint's pedigree from the most illustrious families of Suabia; but the ancient author of his life published

* Cluverius and Sanson think the great city called Augusta Veromanduum was destroyed by the Barbarians in the fifth age, and that it stood where now the Premonstratensian abbey of Vermand is situate, three leagues from Noyon, and four from Peronne. But the Abbé de Longrue shows from the Acts of St. Quintin, St. Gregory of Tours, and several chronicles, that the body of St. Quintin was buried near Augusta Veromanduum and always kept in that city. Consequently, the town of St. Quintin's was rebuilt upon the spot where the old city stood, which also appears by the neighbourhood of the river Somme.