

Seeing no such judgment threaten, they began themselves to deride a senseless trunk reduced to ashes. The standard of the Nile's increase was kept in this temple, but it was on this occasion removed into the cathedral. The idolaters expected the river would swell no more: but finding the succeeding years very fertile, they condemned the vanity of their superstitions, and embraced the faith. Two churches were built on the place where this temple stood, and its metal was converted to the use of churches. The busts of Serapis on the walls, doors, and windows of the houses were broken and taken away. The temples all over Egypt were demolished, during the two following years. In pulling down those of Alexandria, the cruel mysteries of Mithra were discovered, and in the secret Adyta were found the heads of many infants cut off, cruelly mangled, and superstitiously painted. The artifices of the priests of the idols were likewise detected: there were hollow idols of wood and brass, placed against a wall, with subterraneous passages, through which the priests entered the hollow trunks of the idols, and gave answers as oracles, as is related by Theodoret,(1) and Rufinus.(2) Where the idols were cast down, figures of the cross were set up in their places. These martyrs suffered in the year 392. See Theodoret, Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, Fleury, b. 19. Tillemont in the history of Theodosius, art. 52—55.

ST. JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA.

HE was a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, but a faithful disciple of Jesus. It was no small proof of his great piety, that, though he had riches and honours to lose, he feared not the malice of men, but at a time when the apostles trembled, boldly declared himself a follower of Jesus who was crucified; and with the greatest devotion embalmed and buried his sacred body. This saint was the patron of Glastenbury, where a church and hermitage, very famous in the times of the ancient Britons,* were built by the first apostles of this island: among whom some moderns have placed St. Joseph himself, and Aristobulus.

(1) B. 5. c. 22.

(2) Ib. 2. c. 25.

* See Matthew of Westminster, and John of Glastenbury, in their histories of that famous abbey, published by Hearne; also Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*.