

Nay, their fury was so successful as to the Aungervillian library, which was the oldest, largest, and choicest, that we have not so much as a catalogue of the books left. Nor did they rest here. They visited likewise the college-libraries, and one may guess at the work they made with them, by a letter still kept in the archives, where one of them boasts, that New-College quadrangle was all covered with the leaves of their torn books, &c. The university thought fit to complain to the government of this barbarity and covetousness of the visitors, but could not get any more by it than one single book, given to the library by John Whethamsted the learned abbot of St. Alban's, wherein is contained part of Valerius Maximus, with the commentaries of Dionysius de Burgo; and to this day there is no book in the Bodleian library besides this and two more which are certainly known to have belonged to either of the former libraries. Nay, and the university itself, despairing ever to enjoy any other public library, thought it advisable to dispose of the very desks and shelves the books stood on, in the year 1555." Some few books indeed were accidentally redeemed out of the hands of the grocers; and archbishop Parker afterward rescued gleanings of many valuable manuscripts, which treasure he bequeathed partly to the university library, but principally to Bennet-College in Cambridge. At Oxford, Sir Thomas Bodley, by a noble munificence, never to be sufficiently extolled, founded a new public library, which was opened in 1602; and his example has been imitated by others. But their diligence was not able to retrieve many valuable manuscripts which were no more.

To return to St. Augustine, the greater the fervour of the English was for the first ages after they were called to the faith, the more criminal was the fall of those who afterward degenerated from that sanctity, notwithstanding the powerful influence of such examples. This their ingratitude drew upon them heavy chastisements by the inroads of the Danes, and other calamities that succeeded.

ST. ELEUTHERIUS, POPE, M.

He was by birth a Grecian, and deacon of the church of Rome under pope Anicetus. He succeeded St. Soter in the pontificate in 176, and governed the Church whilst it was beaten with violent storms. Montanus, an ambitious vain man of Mœsia on the confines of Phrygia, sought to raise himself among men by pretending that the

Holy Ghost spoke by his mouth, and published forged revelations. His followers afterward advanced that he was himself the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete Spirit sent by Christ according to his promises to perfect his law. They seem at first only to have been schismatics and enthusiasts; but soon after added heresy and blasphemy, calling Montanus the Holy Ghost in the same manner that Christ is God the Son. They affected an excessive rigour, had many fasts, kept three Lents in the year, refused the communion and absolution to persons who had fallen into any sin of impurity, condemned second marriages as adulteries, and taught that it is unlawful to flee from persecution. Priscilla and Maximilla, two women of the town of Pepuza in Phrygia, vaunted their pretended prophecies, and were the oracles of their deluded votaries. The devil uses all sorts of baits to destroy souls. If many perish by those of pleasure, others fall by pride, which is gratified by a love of singularity, and by an affected austerity. Some who braved the racks and gridirons of the persecutors, and despised the allurements of pleasure, had the misfortune to become the dupes of this wretched enthusiast, and martyrs of the devil. False prophets wear every face except that of a sincere and docile humility, though their austerity towards themselves usually ends in a short time in some shameful libertinism, when vanity, the main-spring of their passions, is either cloyed or finds nothing to gratify it. In this we see the false rigorists of our times resemble those of former ages. Pharisee-like they please themselves, and gratify their own pride in an affected severity: by it they also seek to establish themselves in the opinion of others. But humility and obedience are a touchstone which discovers their spirit. Montanus succeeded to the destruction of many souls who by pride or the like passions sought the snare: among

others the great Tertullian fell, and not only regarded Montanus as the paraclete, but so much lost his faith and his reason as to honour the ground on which his two pretended prophetesses had trod; and to publish in his writings their illusions and dreams concerning the colour of a human soul, and the like absurdities and inconsistencies as oracles of the eternal truth. The Montanists of Asia, otherwise called Cataphryges and Pepuzenians, sought in the beginning the communion and approbation of the bishop of Rome, to whom they sent letters and presents. A certain pope was prevailed upon, by the good accounts he had received of their severe morals and virtue, to send them letters of communion. But Praxeas, one who had confessed his faith before the persecutors, arriving at Rome, gave him such informations concerning the Pepuzenians and their prophecies, showing him that he could not admit them without condemning the judgment of his predecessors, that he revoked the letters of peace which he had determined to send, and refused their presents. This is the account which Tertullian, himself a Montanist, gives of the matter.¹ Dr. Cave and some others think this pope was Eleutherius, and that he approved the very doctrine of the Montanists; which is certainly a mistake. For the pope received from Praxeas only information as to matters of fact. He was only undeceived by him as to persons and facts, and this before any sentence was given. Nay, it seems that the Montanists had not then openly broached their errors in faith, which they for some time artfully disguised. It seems also, from the circumstance of the time, that the pope whom Praxeas undeceived was Victor, the successor of Eleutherius, and that Eleutherius himself had before rejected the pretended prophets.²

1 L. contra Prax. c. 1.

2 See Tillemont, Ceillier on Victor.

This good pope had the affliction to see great havoc made in his flock by the persecution, especially at Vienne, under Marcus Aurelius. But he had, on the other side, the comfort to find the losses richly repaired by the acquisition of new countries to the faith. The light of the gospel had, in the very times of the apostles, crossed the sea into the island of Great Britain; but seems to have been almost choked by the tares of the reigning superstitions, or oppressed by the tumults of wars in the reduction of that valiant people under the Roman yoke, till God¹ who chose poor fishermen to convert the world, here taught a king to esteem it a greater happiness to become an apostle, and extend his faith in this remote corner of the world, than to wear a crown. This was Lucius, a petty king, who reigned in part of the island. His Roman name shows that he was one of those kings whom the Romans honoured with that dignity in remote conquered countries to be their instruments in holding them in subjection. Lucius sent a solemn embassy to Rome to beg some zealous clergymen of pope Eleutherius who might instruct his subjects, and celebrate and administer to them the divine mysteries. Our saint received the message with joy, and sent apostolical men, who preached Christ in this island with such fruit that the faith in a very short time passed out of the provinces which obeyed the Romans into those northern parts which were inaccessible to their eagles, as Tertullian wrote soon after.² Fugatius and Damianus are said to have been the two principal of these Roman missionaries: the old Welsh Chronicle, quoted by Usher, calls them Dwywan and Fagan. They died in or near the diocess of Landaff; and Harpsfield³ says, there stood in Wales a church dedicated to God under their invoca-

¹ See Bede, l. 1. ch. 4.

² L. contra Judæos,

³ Hist, l. 1. c. 3.

tion. Stow in his Annals says that in Somersetshire there remaineth a parish church bearing the name of St. Deruvion. From this time the faith became very flourishing in Britain, as is mentioned by Origen, Eusebius, St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Gildas, &c. quoted by Usher, Alford, &c.¹ Florinus, who taught God to be the author of evil, and Blastus, who pretended that the custom of celebrating Easter on the fourteenth day of the moon, which was tolerated in the Orientals, ought to be followed at Rome, were condemned by St. Eleutherius, who governed the

¹ Some late Protestant writers have endeavoured to persuade us, that the Britons received the faith from the Orientals, not from Rome. The matter is no otherwise of importance than as an historical fact. But the testimony of all our ancient historians and monuments shows, that as the provinces of the West in general received the faith principally from the preaching of SS. Peter and Paul and their disciples, so Britain in particular was indebted to the bishops of Rome on that score, and at first kept the feast of Easter according to the tradition of that church. The council of Arles in 314 confirmed the Roman custom of celebrating Easter; in which synod were present three British bishops, viz. those of London, Colchester, and York, witnesses of the practice of this whole church. The same point of discipline was ordained by the council of Nice in 325, and that same year Constantine reckoned the Britons among those who agreed with Rome in the keeping of Easter. After this time, whether by ignorance or by what other means is uncertain, the Britons, Scots, and Irish admitted an erroneous rule in this point of discipline, by which once in several years they kept Easter on the same day with the Jews; yet did not fall in with the Asiatics, who celebrated that feast always with the Jews on the fourteenth day of the first lunar month, after the vernal equinox, on whatever day of the week it fell, as Eusebius, b. 5. c. 22, and others testify. Those who did this upon the false and heretical principle, that the Jewish ceremonial laws bound Christians, and were not abolished when fulfilled by the coming of Christ, were heretics: the rest, on account of their separation from the Church, and obstinately refusing submission to its decrees and censures, were, after the councils of Arles and Nice, schismatics, and were called Quartodecimans. But the erroneous practice of the Britons differed widely from this of the Orientals, as St. Wilfrid demonstrated before Oswi, king of the Northumbrians, as is related by Bede, Hist. b. 3. c. 25. For they celebrated Easter always on a Sunday, and on that which fell on or after the fourteenth day; whereas Catholics, with the council of Nice, to recede farther from the appearance of observing the legal rites, never kept it on the fourteenth day; but when that happened to be a Sunday, deferred the celebration of this festival to the Sunday following; to which practice the Scots and Britons at length acceded, as we shall see in the lives of SS. Wilfrid and Cummianus: in the mean time they lay under no censure, differing from the Quartodecimans, who kept Easter always with the Jews on the fourteenth day.

Church fifteen years, and died soon after the emperor Commodus in 192. He was buried on the Salarian road, but his remains have been translated to the Vatican church.

See St. Irenæus, l. 3. c. 3. Eusebius, l. 4. c. 22. l. 5. c. 3, 4, 14. Tillemont, t. 3. p. 60.

SAINT QUADRATUS, BISHOP OF ATHENS, C.

HE was a disciple of the apostles, inherited their spirit and gifts, and by his miracles and labours exceedingly propagated the faith, as Eusebius¹ testifies; who calls him a divine man, and assures us that he was endued with an eminent gift of prophecy, and was one of those by whom the Holy Ghost continued to work the same miracles as by the apostles. St. Publius, the immediate successor of St. Dionysius the Areopagite, being crowned with martyrdom under Adrian in the year 125, St. Quadratus was placed in that episcopal chair. By his qualifications in polite literature, he was esteemed by the heathens as a great ornament to their city, then the seat of the muses; and by his zeal and piety he assembled the faithful together, whom the terrors of the persecution had scattered, and rekindled the fire of their faith, which had begun in many to be extinguished, says St. Jerom. The emperor Adrian passed the winter at Athens in 124, and was initiated in the mysteries of the goddess Eleusina.²

1 Hist. b. 3. c. 37.

2 The *Eleusinia* were secret rites performed in the night in honour of the goddess Eleusina or Ceres, very ancient at Athens, from whence they were afterwards spread over the whole Roman empire, and beyond its boundaries. Bishop Warburton, by an express dissertation, shows at length that these mysteries were instituted at Athens to propagate among the great men of the republic the doctrines of a providence governing men's actions and all events, and of a future state of reward and punishment after death, of which these rites contained several remarkable symbols, though blended with idolatrous superstitions. Into these, as into other secret rites of idolatry, wicked men at last introduced the basest crimes of lust and revenge. The