

Rheims, where he joined assiduous prayer to the greatest austerities. He was eminent for his knowledge of the scriptures, and for instructing all those who came to consult him. He died before the middle of the seventh century, on the 20th of October, and was buried in the place of his retirement; but his relics were removed in the ninth century to the abbey of Hautevilliers, near Rheims. He is mentioned this day in the Roman Martyrology. See Mabill. Act. SS. t. 1, and part. 2, sec. 4, Ben. Flodoard, Hist. Rem. l. 2, c. 9; Baillet, &c.

ST. AIDAN, bishop of Mayo, is mentioned this day in the Irish Calendar. He died in 768. See Ware and Colgan.

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## OCTOBER XXI.

### ST. URSULA AND HER COMPANIONS, VV., MM.

#### MIDDLE OF THE FIFTH AGE.

WHEN the pagan Saxons laid waste our island from sea to sea, many of its old British inhabitants fled into Gaul, and settled in Armorica, since called, from them, Little Britain. Others took shelter in the Netherlands, and had a settlement near the mouth of the Rhine, at a castle called Brittenburgh, as appears from ancient monuments and Belgic historians produced by Usher. These holy martyrs seem to have left Britain about that time, and to have met a glorious death in defence of their virginity from the army of the Huns, which in the fifth age plundered that country, and carried fire and the sword wherever they came. It is agreed that they came originally from Britain, and Ursula was the conductor and encourager of this holy troop.\* Though their leaders were certainly virgins, it is not

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\* Ancient calendars, copied by Usuard, mentions SS. Saula, Martha, and Companions, Virgins and Martyrs, at Cologne, on the 20th of October. Natalis, Alexander, and the authors of the New Paris Breviary take this Saula to be the same with Ursula. The Bollandists promise new memoirs relating to these martyrs; all the acts which have been published are universally rejected. Baronius thinks the ground of the account given of them by Geoffrey of Monmouth, in his MS. history of the British affairs, kept in the Vatican library, preferable to the rest.—This author tells us, that Ursula was daughter to Dionoc, king or prince of Cornwall; and that she was sent by her father to Conan, a British prince who had followed the tyrant Maximus, who had commanded the

improbable that some of this company had been engaged in a married state. Sigebert's Chronicle<sup>(1)</sup> places their martyrdom in 453. It happened near the Lower Rhine, and they were buried at Cologne, where, according to the custom of those early ages, a great church was built over their tombs, which was very famous in 643, when St. Cunibert was chosen archbishop in it. St. Anno, who was bishop of Cologne in the eleventh age, out of devotion to these holy martyrs, was wont to watch whole nights in this church in prayer at their tombs, which have been illustrated by many miracles. These martyrs have been honoured by the faithful for many ages, with extraordinary devotion in this part of Christendom. St. Ursula, who was the mistress and guide to heaven to so many holy maidens, whom she animated to the heroic practice of virtue, conducted to the glorious crown of martyrdom, and presented spotless to Christ, is regarded as a model and patroness by those who undertake to train up youth in the sentiments and practice of piety and religion. She is patroness of the famous college of Sarbonne, and titular saint of that church. Several religious establishments have been erected under her name and patronage for the virtuous education of young ladies. The Ursulines were instituted in Italy for this great and important end, by B. Angela of Brescia, in 1537, approved by Paul III. in 1544, and obliged to inclosure and declared a religious Order under the rule of St. Aus-

(1) Chron. Usher Ant. Britan. c. 8, p. 108, and c. 12, p. 224.

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imperial forces in Britain under Gratian, and assuming the imperial diadem, in 382, had passed into Gaul. But several circumstances in this relation show it to be of no better a stamp than the rest. It appears by the tombs of these martyrs at Cologne, that their number was very great. Wandelbert, a monk of Pruin, in Ardenne, in a private Martyrology which he compiled in verse, in 850, makes their number to amount to thousands; but he had seen their false acts. Sigebert, in 1111, makes them eleven thousand. Some think this a mistake arising from the abbreviation XI. MV. for eleven martyrs and virgins: for the chronicle of St. Tron's seems to count eleven companions. (Spicileg. t. 7, p. 475.) The Roman Martyrology mentions only St. Ursula and her companions; nor is their number determined in any authentic records.—Geoffrey of Monmouth places their martyrdom in the reign of Maximus, towards the close of the fourth age: but Otho of Frisingen, (l. 4, c. 28,) the interpolator of Sigebert's Chronicle, and Bishop Usher, in the middle of the fifth. As to the fancy, that Undecimilla might have been the name of one of these virgins, (see Valesiana, p. 49,) it is destitute of all shadow of the least foundation, and exploded by all critics.

tin, by Gregory XIII., in 1572, at the solicitation of St. Charles Borromeo, who exceedingly promoted this holy institute. The first monastery of this Order in France was founded at Paris, in 1611, by Madame Magdalen l'Huillier, by marriage, de Sainte-Beuve. Before this, the pious mother, Anne de Xaintonge of Dijon, had instituted in Franche-Compte, in 1606, a religious congregation of Ursulines for the like purpose, which is settled in many parts of France, in which strict inclosure is not commanded.

Nothing, whether in a civil or religious view, is more important in the republic of mankind than a proper and religious education of youth, nor do any establishments deserve equal attention and encouragement among men with those which are religiously and wisely calculated for this great end. Yet, alas! is anything in the world more neglected either by parents at home, or by the wrong methods which are too frequently pursued in the very nurseries which are founded for training up youth? A detail would be too long for this place. There is certainly no duty which requires more virtue, prudence, and experience, or which parents, tutors, masters, mistresses, and others are bound more diligently to study in its numberless branches.\* But it is the height of our misfortune, that there is scarcely a person in the world, howsoever unqualified, who does not think it an easy task, and look upon himself as equal to it; who is not ready to undertake it without reflection; and who consequently is not supinely careless both in studying and discharging its obligations; though no employment more essentially requires an extensive knowledge of all duties, of human nature, and its necessary accomplishments; the utmost application, attention, and patience; the most consummate prudence and virtue, and an extraordinary succour of divine light and grace.

#### ST. HILARION, ABBOT.

HILARION was born in a little town called Tabatha, five miles to the south of Gaza; he sprang like a rose out of thorns, his

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\* Read Fenelon, *Sur l'Education des Filles*; and another older French book, printed in English, in 1678, under this title, *The Christian Education of Children*; and Dr. Gobinet's *Instructions of Youth*; also, his treatise of *The Imitation of the holy Youth of J. C*