

was a catechumen, who, refusing to sacrifice to idols, was condemned to lose his head, and baptized in his own blood. Ser F. Thomas ab Incarnatione. Hist. Portug. Sæc. 4, c. 6, p. 218.

APRIL XIII.

ST. HERMENEGILD, MARTYR.

From St. Gregory the Great, Dial. b. 3, c. 31; St. Gregory of Tours, Hist. b. 5, c. 39, and b. 9, c. 16; Mariana, Hist. b. 5, c. 12; Flores, Espana Sagrada. t. 5, c. 2, p. 200; Henschenius, t. 2, Apr. p. 134.

A. D. 586.

LEVIGILD, or LEOVIGILD, the Goth,* king of Spain, had two sons by his first wife Theodosia, namely, Hermenegild and Recared. These he educated in the Arian heresy, which he himself professed, but married Hermenegild, the eldest, to Ingondes, a zealous Catholic, and daughter to Sigebert, king of Austrasia, in France. The grandees had hitherto disposed of their crown by election, but Levigild, to secure it to his posterity, associated his two sons with him in his sovereignty, and allotted to each a portion of his dominions to inure them to government, and Seville fell to the lot of the elder. Ingondes had much to suffer from Gosvint, a bigoted Arian, whom Levigild had married after the death of Theodosia; but, in spite of all her cruel treatment, she adhered strictly to the Catholic faith. And such was the force of her example, and of the instructions and exhortations of St. Leander, bishop of Seville, that the prince became a convert; and, taking the opportunity of his father's absence, abjured his heresy, and was received into the church by the imposition of hands, and the unction of chrism on the forehead. Levigild, who was already exasperated against his son, upon the first appearance of his change, being now informed of his open profession of the Catholic faith, in a transport of rage divested

* This name in original Gothic manuscripts is constantly written Liuvigild, as Flores observes. He began his reign in the year of our Lord 568, of the Spanish æra 606, and put S. Hermenegild to death in the eighteenth year of his reign, as is clear from an old chronicle published by Flores, Espana Sagrada, t. 2, p. 199.

him of the title of king, and resolved to deprive him of his possessions, his princess, and even his life, unless he returned to his former sentiments. Hermenegild, looking upon himself as a sovereign prince, resolved to stand upon his defence, and was supported by all the Catholics in Spain ; but they were by much too weak to defend him against the Arians. The prince therefore sent St. Leander to Constantinople, to solicit Tiberius for succours. But he dying soon after, and his successor Maurice being obliged to employ all his forces to defend his own dominions against the Persians, who had made many irruptions into the imperial territories, no succours were to be obtained. Hermenegild implored next the assistance of the Roman generals, who were with a small army in that part of Spain, on the coast of the Mediterranean, of which the empire of Constantinople still retained possession. They engaged themselves by oath to protect him, and received his wife Ingondes and infant son for hostages ; but, being corrupted by Levigild's money, they basely betrayed him. Levigild held his son besieged in Seville above a year, till Hermenegild, no longer able to defend himself in his capital, fled secretly to join the Roman camp ; but, being informed of their treachery, he went to Cordova, and thence to Osseto, a very strong place in which there was a church held in particular veneration over all Spain. He shut himself up in this fortress with three hundred chosen men ; but the place was taken and burnt by Levigild. The prince sought a refuge in a church at the foot of the altar ; and the Arian king not presuming to violate that sacred place, permitted his second son, Recared, then an Arian, to go to him, and to promise him pardon, in case he submitted himself and asked forgiveness. Hermenegild believed his father sincere, and going out threw himself at his feet. Levigild embraced him, and renewed his fair promises, with a thousand caresses, till he had got him into his own camp. He then ordered him to be stripped of his royal robes, loaded with chains, and conducted prisoner to the tower of Seville, in 586, when the saint had reigned two years, as F. Flores proves from one of his coins, and other monuments.

There he again employed all manner of threats and promises to draw him back to his heresy, and hoping to overcome his constancy, caused him to be confined in a most frightful dun-

geon, and treated with all sorts of cruelty. The martyr repeated always what he had before wrote to his father: "I confess your goodness to me has been extreme. I will preserve to my dying breath the respect, duty, and tenderness which I owe you; but is it possible that you should desire me to prefer worldly greatness to my salvation? I value the crown as nothing; I am ready to lose sceptre and life too, rather than abandon the divine truth." The prison was to him a school of virtue. He clothed himself in sackcloth, and added other voluntary austerities to the hardships of his confinement, and with fervent prayers begged of God to vouchsafe him the strength and assistance which was necessary to support him in his combat for the truth. The solemnity of Easter being come, the perfidious father sent to him an Arian bishop in the night, offering to take him into favour if he received the communion from the hand of that prelate; but Hermenegild rejected the proposal with indignation, reproaching the messenger with the impiety of his sect, as if he had been at full liberty. The bishop, returning to the Arian king with this account, the furious father, seeing the faith of his son proof against all his endeavours to pervert him, sent soldiers out of hand to dispatch him. They entered the prison, and found the saint fearless and ready to receive the stroke of death, which they instantly inflicted on him, cleaving his head with an axe, whereby his brains were scattered on the floor. St. Gregory the Great attributes to the merits of this martyr the conversion of his brother, King Recared, and of the whole kingdom of the Visigoths in Spain. Levigild was stung with remorse for his crime, and though by God's secret, but just judgment, he was not himself converted, yet, on his death-bed, he recommended his son Recared to St. Leander, desiring him to instruct him in the same manner as he had done his brother Hermenegild—that is, to make him a Catholic. This saint received the crown of martyrdom on Easter-Eve, the 13th of April. His body remains at Seville. St. Gregory of Tours observes, that whatever guilt this holy king and martyr incurred by taking up arms against his father, this at least was expiated by his heroic virtue and death. Before St. Hermenegild declared himself a Catholic the persecution was raised with great violence against

the Goths, who embraced the orthodox faith of the Trinity, and many lost their goods, many were banished, and several died of hunger, or by violence. St. Gregory of Tours ascribes not only the death of St. Hermenegild, but also this whole persecution, chiefly to the instigation of Gosvint.

St. Hermenegild began then to be truly a king, says St. Gregory the Great, when he became a martyr. From his first conversion to the true faith, it was his main study to square his life by the most holy maxims of the gospel. Yet, perhaps, whilst he lived amidst the hurry, flatteries, and pomp of a throne, his virtue was for some time imperfect, and his heart was not perfectly crucified to the world. But humiliations and sufferings for Christ, which the saint bore with the heroic courage, the fidelity, and perfect charity of the martyrs, entirely broke all secret ties of his affections to the earth, and rendered him already a martyr in the disposition of his soul, before he attained to that glorious crown. Christ founded all the glory of his humanity and that of his spiritual kingdom, the salvation of the universe, and all the other great designs of his sacred incarnation, upon the meanness of his poor and abject life, and his ignominious sufferings and death. This same conduct he held in his apostles and all his saints. Their highest exaltation in his grace and glory, was built upon their most profound humility, and the most perfect crucifixion of their hearts to the world and themselves; the foundation of which was most frequently laid by the greatest exterior as well as interior humiliations. How sweet, how glorious were the advantages of which, by this means, they became possessed, even in this life! God making their souls his kingdom, and by his grace and holy charity reigning sovereignly in all their affections. *Thou hast made us a kingdom to our God, and we shall reign*, say all pious souls to Christ, penetrated with gratitude for his inexpressible mercy and goodness, with esteem for his grace and love alone, and with a contempt of all earthly things. They are truly kings, depending on God alone, being in all things, with inexpressible joy, subject to him only, and to all creatures, purely for his sake; enjoying a perfect liberty, despising equally the frowns and the flatteries of the world, ever united to God. The riches of this interior kingdom, which they possess in

Christ, are incomprehensible, as St. Paul assures us. They consist in his grace, light, science of divine things, true wisdom, and sublime sentiments of his love and all virtues. In this kingdom, souls are so replenished with the fulness of God, as St. Paul expresses it, that they can desire no other goods. This is to be truly rich. Joy and pleasure are possessed in this kingdom. The solid delight, sweetness, comfort, and peace, which a soul relishes in it, surpass all the heart can desire, or the understanding conceive. Lastly, all worldly splendour is less than a dream or shadow, if compared to the dignity, glory, and honour of this happy state. Thus was St. Hermenegild a great king in his chains. We also are invited to the same kingdom.

ST. GUINOC, B. C. IN SCOTLAND.

By his prayers and counsels, he was many years the support both of the church and state, among the Scots, in the ninth century, in the reign of Kenneth II., &c. The Aberdeen breviary and Henschenius place him under King Enos. He died about the year 838. See Major, 1, 2, c. 14. Camerarius in *Menologio Scotico*, King, &c.

ST. CARADOC, PRIEST AND HERMIT.

He was a Welch nobleman, native of Brecknockshire, who, after he had received a liberal education, enjoyed the confidence of Rees, or Resus, prince of South Wales, and held an honourable place in his court. The prince one day, on account of two greyhounds which were lost, fell into such a fury against Caradoc as to threaten his life. Caradoc, from this disgrace and check, learned the inconstancy and uncertainty of worldly honours, and the best founded hopes, and resolved to dedicate himself altogether to the service of the King of kings, whose promises can never fail, and whose rewards are eternal. Upon the spot he made the sacrifice of himself to God, by a vow of perpetual continency, and of embracing a religious life. Repairing to Landaff, he received from the bishop the clerical tonsure, and for some time served God in the church of St. Theliau. Being desirous of finding a closer solitude, he afterwards spent some years in a little hut, which he built himself,