

Pionius to the judges, and in all the circumstances of his martyrdom, we admire the ardent piety and courage of one who had entirely devoted himself to God, and employed his whole life in his service. When Quintilian the proconsul arrived at Smyrna, he caused Pionius to be hung on the rack, and his body to be torn with iron hooks, and afterwards condemned him to be burned alive: he was accordingly nailed to a trunk or post, and a pile heaped round him and set on fire. Metrodorus, a Marcionite priest, underwent the same punishment with him. His acts were written by eye-witnesses, quoted by Eusebius, l. 4. c. 15. and are extant genuine in Ruinart, p. 12.—See Tillemont, t. 3. p. 397. Bollandus, Feb. t. 1. p. 37.

ST. BRIDGIT, OR BRIDGET, V.

AND BY CONTRACTION, BRIDE, ABBESS, AND PATRONESS
OF IRELAND.

SHE was born at Fochard, in Ulster, soon after Ireland had been blessed with the light of faith. She received the religious veil in her youth, from the hands of St. Mel, nephew and disciple of St. Patrick. She built herself a cell under a large oak, thence called Kill-dara, or cell of the oak; living, as her name implies, the bright shining light of that country by her virtues. Being joined soon after by several of her own sex, they formed themselves into a religious community, which branched out into several other nunneries throughout Ireland; all which acknowledged her for their mother and foundress, as in effect she was of all in that kingdom. But a full account of her virtues has not been transmitted down to us, together with the veneration of her name. Her five modern lives mention little else but wonderful miracles. She flourished in the beginning of the sixth century, and is named in the Martyrology of Bede, and in all others since that age. Several churches in England and Scotland are dedicated to God under her name, as, among others, that of St. Bride in Fleet-street; several also in Germany, and some in France. Her name occurs in most copies of the Martyrology which bears the name of St. Jerom, especially in those of Esternach and Corbie, which are most ancient. She is commemorated in the divine office in most churches of Germany, and in that of Paris, till the year 1607, and in many others in France. One of the Hebrides, or western islands, which belong to Scotland,

near that of Ila, was called, from a famous monastery built there in her honour, Brigidiani. A church of St. Briget, in the province of Athol, was reputed famous for miracles, and a portion of her relics was kept with great veneration in a monastery of regular canons at Aburnethi, once capital of the kingdom of the Picts, and a bishopric, as Major mentions.(1) Her body was found with those of SS. Patrick and Columba, in a triple vault in Down-Patrick, in 1185, as Giraldus Cambrensis informs us:(2) they were all three translated to the cathedral of the same city; but their monument was destroyed in the reign of king Henry VIII.(3) The head of St. Bride is now kept in the church of the Jesuits at Lisbon.(4) See Bollandus, Feb. t. 1. p. 99.

ST. KINNIA, V.

HER memory was long sacred in Ireland, and her relics were in veneration at Lowth, in the southern part of Ulster: but we have no other authentic account of her actions than that she was baptized by St. Patrick, and received the religious veil at his hand. See Jocelin's life of St. Patrick, Colgan, and Bollandus ad 1. Feb. p. 96.

ST. SIGEBERT II.,

FRENCH KING OF AUSTRASIA, C.

DAGOBERT I., king of France, led for some time a very dissolute life, but was touched by an extraordinary grace upon the birth of his son Sigebert, and from that time was entirely converted to God. Bagnetruide, our saint's mother, is only styled the concubine of Dagobert, though he was publicly married to her. The father desiring to have his son baptized by the most holy prelate of his dominions, recalled St. Amand, bishop of Maestricht, whom he had banished for his zeal in reproving his vices, fell at his feet at Clichy, near Paris, to ask his pardon, promised amendment, and by the advice of St. Owen and St. Eligius, then laymen in his court, engaged him to initiate his son in the sacrament of regeneration. The ceremony was performed with great pomp at Orleans, Charibert, king of part of Aquitaine, and brother to Dagobert, being god-father. The young prince's education was intrusted by the father to the blessed Pepin of

(1) Major de Gestis Sæctor. l. 2. c. 14.

(2) Topogr. Hibern. dist. 3. c. 18. Camden, &c.

(3) Camden. (4) Bolland. p. 112 and p. 941. t. 1. Februarii.