

founded by Archenald, St. Mauront's uncle. At the same time the body of St. Mauront with that of St. Amatus, was translated from Breüil to Douay, and both are there enshrined in the church of St. Amatus, which, since the secularization of the monastery in 940, is a collegiate church of canons. In its archives and in the ancient calendars of the cathedral of Arras, St. Martin's at Tournay, Liesse, &c. St. Mauront is styled sometimes Levite or Deacon, and sometimes Abbot; by which he seems never to have been ordained priest. His body is kept in a rich shrine in this church, in which is a chapel sacred to his name and his parents, where his statue is seen betwixt those of his parents. He is represented holding in his right hand a sceptre, and in his left a building with a tower or belfry. The abbey of St. Guislin in Hainault possesses his skull in a shrine of silver gilt. The cathedral of Arras and some other churches, show particles of his relics.<sup>1</sup> On his life consult Huebald.

## ST. AVERTIN, C.

He was a holy deacon, who attended St. Thomas of Canterbury in his exile, and in all his troubles. After the martyrdom of that prelate, Avertin consecrated himself to the service of the poor and strangers at Vinzai, a village in Touraine, where he happily ended his course about 1189. See the new Martyrology of Evreux, that of Tours, &c. on the fifth of May.

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## MAY VI.

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## ST. JOHN BEFORE THE LATIN GATE.

From St. Jerom in Jovin. t. 1. p. 14. Tertullian, Præscr. c. 36. Tillem. t. 1. p. 338. and L'Istoria della Chiesa di S. Giovanni avanti Porta Latina, Scritta da Gio. Mario Crescimbeni. Roma, 1716. 4to.

## A. D. 95.

WHEN the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, strangers as yet to the mystery of the cross

<sup>1</sup> The B. Rictrudes, besides Mauront, had three other children. 1. The B. Clotsenda, her eldest daughter, abbess of Marchiennes after her death, honoured on the 13th of June. 2. St. Eusebia or Isoye, chosen abbess of Hamaye (Hamaticum) at twelve years of age, about the year 646, where she succeeded Gertrude, grandmother to Adalbald, who with St. Amand had founded the double monastery of Marchiennes. 3. B. Adalsend, a nun under her at Marchiennes, honoured on the 24th of December. Adalbald is commemorated on the 2d of February. See Molanus, Nat. Sanct. Belg.

and the nature of Christ's kingdom, had, by their mother Salome,<sup>1</sup> besought our Lord to allot them the two first places in his kingdom, (implied by sitting at his right and left-hand,) he asked them whether they were disposed to drink of his cup, or, in other words, to suffer with him, in which case they should not fail to be considered in proportion to their pains and fidelity. The two disciples answered boldly in the affirmative, assuring their divine Master that they were ready to undergo any thing for his sake. Our Lord thereupon foretold them that their sincerity should be brought to the trial, and that they should both be partakers of his cup of sufferings, and undergo bitter things for the honour and confirmation of the Christian religion. This was literally fulfilled in St. James, on his being put to death for the faith by Herod: and this day's festival records in part the manner in which it was verified in St. John. It may be said, without any violence to the sense of the words, that this favourite disciple, who so tenderly loved his Master, and was so tenderly beloved by him, drank of his chalice, and experienced a large share of its bitterness, when he assisted at his crucifixion; feeling then in his soul, by grief and compassion, whatever he saw him suffer on the cross. This was farther fulfilled after the descent of the Holy Ghost, when he underwent the like imprisonment, scourging, &c. with the other apostles, as is recorded in the fifth chapter of the Acts. But our Saviour's prediction was to be accomplished in a more particular manner, and still more conformable to the letter, and which should entitle him to the merit and crown of martyrdom; the instrument whereof was Domitian, the last of the twelve Cæsars.

He was a tyrant, detestable to all men on account of his cruelty, and the author of the se-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xx. 21. Mark x. 35.

cond general persecution of the Church. In the beginning of his reign he accustomed himself to take pleasure in acts of inhumanity, spending part of his time in his closet in catching flies, and sticking them with a sharp bodkin. He debauched his own niece, and impiously took the titles of God and Lord, as Suetonius and Eusebius have recorded. He reigned fifteen years, that is, from the year of Christ 81 to 96. Tacitus says, that in cruelty he surpassed Nero, who often shunned the sight of barbarous executions; whereas Domitian was known to take delight in beholding them. He deluged Rome with the blood of its illustrious citizens, and out of a hatred to virtue, banished the philosophers; on which occasion, Epictetus (whose *Enchiridion* is the most perfect abstract of the justest sentiments of moral virtue ever published by a heathen) and Dio Chrysostomus, with others, were expelled the city. As for the Christians, not only the sanctity of their doctrine and manners was the strongest reproach of the crimes of the tyrant, but the general hatred of the heathens against them excited him to glut his insatiable cruelty with their innocent blood. St. John, who was the only surviving apostle, and who at that time governed all the churches of Asia with the highest reputation which his dignity, extraordinary virtue, and miracles had acquired, was apprehended at Ephesus, and sent prisoner to Rome in the year 95. The emperor did not relent at the sight of a man of his most venerable old age and countenance, which alone might suffice to command respect, but condemned him to a most barbarous death, by ordering him to be cast into a caldron of boiling oil. The holy apostle was probably first scourged, according to the Roman custom with regard to criminals before execution, who could not plead the privilege of being Roman citizens. It is at least certain from Tertullian,

St. Jerom, and Eusebius, that, by the order of the tyrant, he was thrown into a vessel of boiling oil. The martyr doubtless heard, with great joy, this barbarous sentence, exulting at the thought of speedily rejoining his Redeemer, and desiring to repay love for love in the best manner he was able, and to die for Him who had laid down his most precious life to save us sinners from hell. The most cruel torments seemed to him light and most agreeable, because they would, he hoped, unite him for ever to his divine Master and Saviour: but God accepted his will, and crowned his desire; he conferred on him the honour and merit of martyrdom, but suspended the operation of the fire, as he had formerly preserved the three children from hurt in the Babylonian furnace. The seething oil was changed in his regard into a refreshing bath, and the saint came out more fresh and lively than he had entered the caldron. Domitian, with most of the heathens, entertained a great idea of the power of magic, in which he had been confirmed by the reports concerning the prodigies pretended to be wrought by the famous magician, Apollonius of Tyana, whom he had sent for to Rome. He therefore saw this miracle without drawing from it the least advantage, but, like another Pharaoh, remained hardened in his iniquity. However, he contented himself after this with banishing the holy apostle into the little island of Patmos, one of the Sporades, in the Archipelago or Ægean sea. Domitian being assassinated the year following, his statues were every where pulled down, his name erased from all public buildings, and his decrees declared void by the senate. Upon which St. John returned to Ephesus, in the reign of Nerva, who by mildness, during his short reign of one year and four months, laboured to restore the faded lustre of the Roman empire.

This glorious triumph of St. John happened

without the gate of Rome, called Latina, because it led to Latium. A church was consecrated in the same place in memory of this miracle, under the first Christian Emperors, which has always borne this title. It is said to have been a Pagan temple of Diana, before it was converted to the worship of the true God. It was rebuilt by pope Adrian I. in 772. This festival has been kept in many places a holiday. In the twelfth century, and probably long before, till the change of religion, it was observed in England a holiday of the second rank, in which all servile work was forbid, except agriculture. Our pious Saxon ancestors had a singular devotion to St. Peter and St. John the Evangelist.

Our divine Saviour, as a mark of his special favour, and to put their love to the test, asked his two disciples, James and John, whether they could drink of the cup of which he was to drink. His sufferings he called his cup, first, because, out of the excess of his love for man, he was pressed with a burning desire to suffer and die for his redemption, as with a vehement thirst, which nothing but the ignominies and cruel torments of his cross could satiate.<sup>1</sup> O ardent desire of Jesus to suffer for us! O love of his cross! Secondly, Because, among the Jews, a portion which fell to a person's lot was called his cup, Jesus, by this expression gives us to understand, that his cross and suffering were allotted him by his eternal Father as his portion, and that from the first moment of his Incarnation he accepted it cheerfully from his hands, with an entire submission to his will, offering himself as a victim perfectly to accomplish it. He presents his cup to his servants to drink, because there is nothing which produces in them so perfect a conformity with himself, or improves more wonderfully all heroic virtues in their souls, or obtains more

abundantly for them the greatest graces, provided we bear our cross with him, embrace it affectionately for his love, and offer our sufferings to him, uniting them with his. O precious cross! you are the highest royal road to heaven, sanctified and made divine by our sovereign Head, who opened it, and showed the way in which all his elect follow him. St. John suffered above the other saints a martyrdom of love, being a martyr, and more than a martyr, at the foot of the cross of his divine Master, with the true lovers of Jesus, Magdalen, and the Blessed Virgin mother. All his sufferings were by love and compassion imprinted in his soul, and thus shared by him. O singular happiness of St. John, to have stood under the cross of Christ, so near his divine person, when the other disciples had all forsaken him! O extraordinary privilege, to have suffered martyrdom in the person of Jesus, and been eyewitness of all he did or endured, and of all that happened to him in that great sacrifice and mystery!<sup>1</sup> Here he drank of his cup; this was truly a martyrdom, and our Saviour exempted all those who had assisted at the martyrdom of his cross, from suffering death by the hands of persecutors. St. John, nevertheless, received also the crown of this second martyrdom, to which the sacrifice of his will was not wanting, but only the execution.

## SAINT JOHN DAMASCEN,

### FATHER OF THE CHURCH.

From the works of the saint, and the histories of those times. His life written by John IV. patriarch of Jerusalem, who lived two hundred years after him, borrows the first part, before his monastic profession, from uncertain memoirs. See Nat. Alex. sæc. 8. Fleury, b. 42. Papebroke, May 6. Ceillier, t. 18. p. 110.

A. D. 780.

MAHOMET, the great impostor, subdued a con-