

Toledo was held, in which they were expounded in a sense entirely orthodox. The bishops of Rome were anciently chosen by the clergy and people of Rome, according to the discipline of those times; the Christian emperors were the head of the people, on which account their consent was required. But whilst they resided in the East, this condition produced often long delays and considerable inconveniencies. Pope Benedict represented this to Constantine, and that pious prince readily passed a law addressed to the clergy, the people, and the army at Rome, allowing that the person by them elected should be forthwith ordained, as Anastasius relates; nevertheless, some emperors still required to be consulted. Such was the veneration of this good prince for the holy pope Benedict, that he sent to him a lock of the hair of his two sons, Justinian and Heraclius, as a token of their adoption by him, according to the custom of those times. This religious emperor overcame the Saracens in a war of seven years' continuance both by sea and land; he recovered from them several provinces, and obliged them to pay him an annual tribute. He died in peace, in 685. Pope Benedict laboured much for the conversion of heretics, and in repairing and adorning churches. He did not complete eleven months in the pontificate; but filled this short term with good works. He died on the 7th of May, 686, and was buried in St. Peter's church.

See his letter and Anastasius Biblioth. t. 6. Concil.

ST. JOHN OF BEVERLEY, B. C.

THIS illustrious saint was born at Harpham, a village in the province of the Deiri, which comprised Yorkshire, Lancashire, and the rest of the kingdom of the Northumbers, on the south side of the Tyne; what lay beyond it being called

Bernicia. An earnest desire of qualifying himself for the service of God, drew him young into Kent, where he made great progress in learning and piety, in the famous school of St. Theodorus, the archbishop, under the direction of the holy abbot Adrian.¹ Afterward returning into his own country, he pursued the exercises of piety in the monastery of men under St. Hilda, at Whitby; till in the beginning of the reign of king Alfred, upon the death of Eata, he was made bishop of Hagulstad, or Hexam. What time he had to spare from his functions he consecrated to heavenly contemplation; retiring for that purpose into the churchyard of St. Michael's, beyond the river Tyne, about a mile and a half from Hagulstad, especially during the forty days of Lent. He was accustomed to take with him some poor person whom he served during that time. Once in the beginning of a Lent, he took with him a dumb youth, who never had been able to utter one word, and whose head was covered with hideous scabs and scales, without any hair. The saint caused a mansion to be built for this sick youth within his inclosure, and often admitted him into his own cell. On the second Sunday he made the sign of the cross upon his tongue, and loosed it. Then he taught him to say *Gea*, which signifies in Saxon *Yea*, or *Yes*; then the letters of the alphabet, A, B, C, and afterwards syllables and words. Thus the youth miraculously obtained his speech. Moreover, by the saint's blessing the remedies prescribed by a physician whom he employed, his head was entirely healed, and became covered with hair. When St. Wilfrid returned from banishment, St. John yielded up to him the see of Hagulstad: but some time after, upon the death of Bosa, a man of great sanctity and humility, as Bede testifies, he was placed in

¹ Bede, l. 5. c. 2. 6. See *Britannia Sancta*.

the archiepiscopal chair of York. Venerable Bede, who received the holy orders of deacon and priest from his hands, gives ample testimony to his sanctity; and relates the instantaneous cure of the sick wife of a neighbouring thane or lord, by holy water, and several other miracles performed by him from the testimony of Bercthun, abbot of Beverley, and Herebald, abbot of Tinsmouth, who had been eye-witnesses to several of them. St. John made frequent retirement his delight, to renew thereby his spirit of devotion, lest the dissipation of exterior employs should extinguish it. He chose for his retreat a monastery, which he had built at Beverley, then a forest, now a market-town, twenty-seven miles from York. This monastery, according to the custom of those times, he erected for the use of both sexes, and put it under the government of his disciple Bercthun, or Brithun, first abbot of Beverley, then called Endeirwood, or wood of the Deiri. In 717, being much broken with age and fatigues, he resigned his bishopric to his chaplain, St. Wilfrid the younger, and having ordained him bishop of York, he retired to Beverley, where he spent the remaining four years of his life in the punctual performance of all monastic duties. He died there the death of the just, on the 7th of May, 721. His successor governed the see of York fifteen years, was a great lover of the beauty of God's house, and is named among the saints, April the 29th.

The monastery of Beverley having been destroyed by the Danes, king Athelstan, who had obtained a great victory over the Scots, by the intercession of St. John, founded in his honour, in the same place, a rich collegiate church of canons. King Henry V. attributed to the intercession of this saint the glorious victory of Agincourt, on which occasion a synod, in 1416, ordered his festival to be solemnly kept over all England. (See Lynwoode, Provinciale, 104.) Henschenius the Bollandist, in the second tome of May, has published four books of the miracles wrought at the relics of Saint John of Beverley, written by eye witnesses. (P. 173.) His sacred bones were honourably translated into the church by Alfric, archbishop of York, in 1037: a feast in honour of which translation was kept at York on the 25th of October. On

the 13th of September, (not on the 24th as Mr. Stevens says,) in 1664, the sexton, digging a grave in the church of Beverley, discovered a vault of freestone, in which was a box of lead, containing several pieces of bones, with some dust, yielding a sweet smell; with inscriptions, by which it appeared that these were the mortal remains of St. John of Beverley, as we read in Dugdale's History of the Collegiate Church of Beverley, who has transcribed them, p. 57. These relics had been hid in the beginning of the reign of King Edward VI. Dugdale and Stevens testify, that they were all reinterred in the middle alley of the same church. Alcuin¹ had an extraordinary devotion to St. John of Beverley, and in his poem on the saints of York, published by Thomas Gale, gives a long history of the miracles wrought by him from verse 1085 to 1215. Rabanus Maurus has placed Alcuin in his Martyrology on the 19th of May, and Henschenius on that day gives his life, and mentions several private Martyrologies in which his name is found, though he has never been any where honoured in the office of the Church. (Henschenius, t. 4. Maij, p. 334.) On St. John of Beverley, see Bede, Hist. l. 5. c. 2. &c. his life compiled by Folcard, monk of Canterbury, published by Henschenius, with other monuments, t. 2. Maij, p. 168. F. Edw. Maihew, &c.

¹ Alcuin, or Alewine, that is Allwin, (the same name in the original Saxon as Victor, and Vincentius in Latin; Nicetas and Nicephorus in Greek,) was a native of York, as he himself declares in his poem on the saints of that diocess. Foreigners not being accustomed to pronounce the *n*, he omitted it in his name; which he mollified into Albinus, prefixing to it in France the name of Flaccus. In his letters, he often styles himself Flaccus Albinus, never Albinus Flaccus, as many moderns falsely call him. Alcuin was nobly born, became a monk at York, and was made deacon of that church. He learned Latin, Greek, and the elements of the Hebrew language, and went through the sacred studies under Egbert and Elbert, who taught a great school in that city, till they were successively placed in the archiepiscopal chair. When Elbert succeeded Egbert in that dignity, in 766, he committed to Alcuin the care of the school, and of the great library belonging to that church. Eanbald succeeding his uncle Elbert, sent Alcuin to Rome, to bring over his pall, in 780. Charlemagne, king of France, afterward emperor, meeting him at Parma, earnestly desired to detain him; but the canons obliged him to return to his own church. However, that prince prevailed with the king of Northumberland and the archbishop of York to send him back into France. He appointed him to open a great school in his own palace, and generally assisted in person at his lessons, with the princes, his sons, and other lords. He also, by his advice, instituted an academy in his palace, consisting of many learned men, who met on certain days to discourse on points of sacred learning. In this academy, Alcuin took the name of Flaccus from Horace, the king that of David, Adelard of Corbie, that of Augustine, &c. The king sent Alcuin his ambassador to king Offa, in 790, to adjust certain differences; he honoured him exceedingly, and usually called him his master: by his advice he made several literary establishments, and consulted him in affairs of state. The ingenious Gaillard (Hist. de la Rivalité de France et l'Anglet. t. 1. p. 73.) says, The wise Alcuin disgusted Charlemagne from the passion for conquests, by discovering to him a new source of true greatness, far dearer to humanity. That prince, instructed by such a master, learned to set a just value on true knowledge: he placed his glory in protecting science, in perfecting the administration, and in extending, in every respect, the empire of reason. This it is that has principally rendered

the name of that great prince immortal in the eyes of true judges. This great man assisted at the council of Francfort, in 794, and at that of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 799, in which latter he confuted Felix of Urgel, who was present. Felix and Elipandus, another Spanish bishop, revived the Demi-Nestorian error, maintaining that Christ, as man, was only the *adoptive*, not the *natural* Son of God. Whence it would follow, that he assumed not only the human nature, but also a human person: which was the heresy of Nestorius. Elipandus reproached Alcuin for his riches, and the number of his vassals. Alcuin discovers his disinterestedness and spirit of poverty in several letters, as in that to the priest Eata, and in others. Writing to the bishop of Lyons, he justifies himself, saying, "Elipandus objects to me my riches, servants, and vassals, which amount to the number of twenty thousand, not reflecting that the possession of riches is vicious only from the attachment of the heart. It is one thing to possess the world, and another to be possessed by the world. Some possess riches, though perfectly disengaged from them in their hearts: others, though they enjoy none, yet love and covet them." These vassals belonged to the several abbeys of which the king compelled him to undertake the administration; purely that he might establish in them regular discipline, and employ the surplus of the revenues in alms, according to the intentions of such foundations, as Lupus, abbot of Ferriers, (ep. 11,) and the anonymous life of St. Aldericus, archbishop of Sens, assure us: for the king had made him his general almoner to relieve the distressed, and appointed him a house for the reception of strangers. How tedious the hurry of a court is to a lover of learning or solitude, any one may judge who has read the genuine description of a court life, in the time of our king Henry II. in Peter of Blois, or John of Salisbury. Alcuin never ceased to complain of its yoke and the dissipation attending it, and to solicit the king for leave to retire into some monastery, till at length he obtained his request. He petitioned to go to that of Fulda, but the king would by no means consent that he should withdraw to so great a distance from court: at length he suffered him to retire to that of St. Martin's at Tours, of which he had nominated him abbot in 796. He was still obliged often to wait on the king; and settled the reformation of St. Benedict of Anian in the houses which were subject to him. He had long alleged his age and feebleness, that he might be permitted to resign the government of the several great abbeys which had been committed to his care. At length his tears and entreaties prevailed, and according to his earnest desire, he was reduced to the condition of a private monk, (others say regular canon, for he had secularized St. Martin's abbey at Tours, and established canons in it,) some time before his happy death, which happened at Tours on the 19th of May, 804, on Whitsunday, as he had begged of God. See his life in Mabillon, Act. Bened. t. 4. p. 146. also in his Annals of that Order, b. 25. 27. Ceillier, t. 18. p. 278. Biogr. Britann. &c.

The best edition of the works of Alcuin was given us by the learned Andrew Duchesne, in three tomes, in 1617. His comments on the scripture consist in extracts from the ancient fathers. He has left us the lives of St. Vedast, St. Martin, St. Riquier, and St. Willibrord. His letters, of which we have one hundred and fifteen published by Duchesne, sixty-seven by Canisius, several others by Usher, Baluze, and Mabillon, are curious, and are addressed to several kings, queens, prelates, and other great men. His moral works breathe a sincere piety: the dogmatic are solid and close. His doctrine, in all points of faith, is most pure, and he lets slip no opportunity of exerting his zeal in its defence. We are promised a new, complete, and accurate edition of the works of this great man, by a monk of the congregation of St. Vanne.