

who, from experience, are conscious of their own weakness, and find themselves to be no match for the world, unable to counter-mine its policies, and oppose its power, ought to retire as from the face of too potent an enemy; and prefer a contemplative state to a busy and active life: not to indulge sloth, or to decline the service of God and their neighbour; but to consult their own security, and to fly from dangers of sin and vanity. Yet there are some who find the greatest dangers in solitude itself; so that it is necessary for every one to sound his own heart, take a survey of his own forces and abilities, and consult God, that he may best be able to learn the designs of his providence with regard to his soul; in doing which, a great purity of intention is the first requisite. Ease and enjoyment must not be the end of Christian retirement, but penance, labour, and assiduous contemplation; without great fervour and constancy in which, close solitude is the road to perdition. If greater safety, or an unfitness for a public station, or a life of much business (in which several are only public nuisances) may be just motives to some for embracing a life of retirement, the means of more easily attaining to perfect virtue may be such to many. Nor do true contemplatives bury their talents, or cease either to be members of the republic of mankind, or to throw in their mite towards its welfare. From the prayers and thanksgivings, which they daily offer to God for the peace of the world, the preservation of the church, the conversion of sinners, and the salvation of all men, doubtless more valuable benefits often accrue to mankind, than from the alms of the rich, or the labours of the learned. Nor is it to be imagined, how far and how powerful their spirit, and the example of their innocence and perfect virtue, often spread their influence; and how serviceable persons who lead a holy and sequestered life, may be to the good of the world; nor how great glory redounds to God, by the perfect purity of heart and charity to which many souls are thus raised.

ST. HYGINUS, P. AND M.

HE was placed in the chair of St. Peter after the martyrdom of St. Telesphorus, in the year 139. Eusebius informs us,⁽¹⁾ that he sat four years. The church then enjoyed some sort of calm, under the mild reign of the emperor Antoninus Pius; though

(1) Eus. l. 4. c. 11.

several martyrs suffered in his time by the fury of the populace, or the cruelty of certain magistrates. The emperor himself never consented to such proceedings; and when informed of them by the governors of Asia, Athens, Thessalonica, and Larissea, he wrote to them in favour of the Christians, as is recorded by St. Justin and Eusebius.(1)

But the devil had recourse to other arts to disturb the peace of God's church. Cerdo, a wolf in sheep's clothing, in the year 140, came from Syria to Rome, and began to teach the false principles which Marcion adopted afterwards with more success. He impiously affirmed that there were two Gods; the one rigorous and severe, the author of the Old Testament; the other merciful and good, the author of the New, and the father of Christ, sent by him to redeem man from the tyranny of the former; and that Christ was not really born of the Virgin Mary, or true man, but such in shadow only and appearance. Our holy pope, by his pastoral vigilance, detected that monster, and cut him off from the communion of the church. The heresiarch, imposing upon him by a false repentance, was again received; but the zealous pastor having discovered that he secretly preached his old opinions, excommunicated him a second time.(2)

Another minister of Satan was Valentine, who being a Platonic philosopher, puffed up with the vain opinion of his learning, and full of resentment for another's being preferred to him in an election to a certain bishopric in Egypt, as Tertullian relates,(3) revived the errors of Simon Magus, and added to them many other absurd fictions, as of thirty *Æones* or ages, a kind of inferior deities, with whimsical histories of their several pedigrees. Having broached these opinions at Alexandria, he left Egypt for Rome. At first he dissembled his heresies, but by degrees his extravagant doctrines came to light. Hyginus, being the mildest of men, endeavoured to reclaim him without proceeding to extremities; so that Valentine was not excommunicated before the first year of St. Pius, his immediate successor.

St. Hyginus did not sit quite four years, dying in 142. We do not find that he ended his life by martyrdom, yet he is styled a martyr in some ancient calendars, as well as in the present Roman Martyrology; undoubtedly on account of the various persecutions which he suffered, and to which his high station in

(1) Eus. l. 4. c. 26. (2) St. Epiph. hæc. 41. Iren. l. 3. c. 4. Euseb. &c.

(3) Tertull. l. contra Valent. c. 4.

the church exposed him in those perilous times. See Tillemont, T. 2. p. 252.

ST. EGWIN, B. C.

HE was of the royal blood of the Mercian kings, devoted himself to the divine service in his youth, and succeeded Osthryth in the episcopal see of Worcester, in 692. By his zeal and severity in reproving vice, he stirred up some of his own flock to persecute him, which gave him an opportunity of performing a penitential pilgrimage to Rome. Some legends tell us, that setting out he put on his legs iron shackles, and threw the key into the river Severn, others say the Avon; but found it in the belly of a fish, some say at Rome, others in his passage from France to England. After his return, with the assistance of Coenred or Kenred, king of Mercia, he founded the famous abbey of Evesham, under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin. After this he undertook a second journey to Rome, in the company of Coenred, king of the Mercians, and of Offa, of the East Saxons, who gave up their temporal principalities to labour with greater earnestness to secure an eternal crown. St. Egwin died on the 30th of December, in 717, and was buried in the monastery of Evesham. His body was translated to a more honourable place in 1183, probably on the 11th of January, on which day many English Martyrologies mark his festival. See his life in Capgrave, the Annals of Worcester, in Wharton's *Anglia Sacra*; Malmesbury, l. 4. de Pontif. Ang. Harpsfield. Sæc. 8. c. 15. 18. and Dr. Thomas in his *History of the Cathedral of Worcester*. Monast. Anglic. vol. 1. p. 144, and vol. 2. p. 851. Leland's *Collections*, vol. 1. p. 240, and 298. vol. 3. p. 160. Dr. Brown Willis, *History of Abbeys*, t. 1. p. 90.

ST. SALVIUS, OR SAUVE,

BISHOP OF AMIENS,

FAMOUS for miracles, succeeded Ado in 672, and flourished in the reign of Theodoric III. His relics rest at Montreuil, in Picardy, in the Benedictin Abbey which bears his name, whither they were translated from the cathedral of Amiens, several years after his death, as is related in his anonymous life, a piece of uncertain authority with regard to his actions. A relic of this saint was formerly kept with great veneration in the cathedral