

martyr in the Martyrology of Flerus, and in all our English calendars. Speed, in his catalogue, mentions an old church in London, and another at Breve, in Somersetshire, of both which St. Edwin was the titular patron. His death happened in the year of Christ 633, of his age the forty-eighth. In what manner the Christian religion was restored in Northumberland is related in the life of St. Oswald, 5th Aug. On St. Edwin, see Bede, Hist. l. 2, c. 9, 10, 12, 15, 20; William of Malmesbury and Alford, who has inserted, ad ann. 632, the letter of Pope Honorius to this holy king, which is also extant, together with his letter to Honorius, archbishop of Canterbury, in Bede, and Conc. t. 6. See the life of St. Paulinus, Oct. 10.

The relics of St. Ethelburge, wife of St. Edwin, were honoured with those of St. Edburg at Liming monastery. Lel. Collect. t. 1, p. 10.

THE MARTYRS OF TRIERS.

ST. PAULINUS, bishop of Triers, highly extolled by St. Athanasius, St. Hilary, and St. Jerom, suffered grievous persecutions under the Arian emperor Constantius, and was banished by him into Phrygia, where he died. A beautiful church bears his name out of the walls of Triers, served by a college of canons, and enriched with relics of many martyrs crowned under the president Rictius Varus and the emperor Maximian Hercules. They are mentioned in the Acts of SS. Fuscian and Victoricus in Bouquet, &c. See on them Brower, Bue the Bollandist, p. 329, &c. The incredible number of these martyrs is denied by Honthemius, Diss. de Martyr. Trevir.

OCTOBER V.

ST. PLACIDUS, ABBOT, AND COMPANIONS, MM.

From St. Greg. Dial. l. 2, c. 3, 7, and Mabillon, Annal. Bened. t. 1, who shows the several acts of their martyrdom to be pieces of no authority, with all the instruments relative; which is confirmed at large by Bue the Bollandist, § 3 and 4.

A. D. 546.

THE reputation of the great sanctity of St. Benedict, whilst he lived at Sublaco, being spread abroad, the noblest families in

Rome brought their children to him to be educated by him in his monastery. Equitius committed to his care, in 522, his son Maurus, then twelve years of age, and the patrician Tertullus his son Placidus, who was no more than seven. Philip of Macedon, recommending his son Alexander the Great to Aristotle, whom he had chosen for his preceptor, in his letter upon that subject, gave thanks to his gods not so much for having given him a son as for providing him with such a master for his education. With far more reason Tertullus rejoiced that he had found such a sanctuary, where his son, whilst his heart was yet untainted by the world, might happily escape its contagion. St. Gregory relates, that Placidus being fallen into the lake of Sublaco, as he was fetching some water in a pitcher, St. Benedict, who was in the monastery, immediately knew this accident, and, calling Maurus said to him: "Brother, run, make haste; the child is fallen into the water." Maurus, having begged his blessing, ran to the lake, and walked upon the water above a bow-shot from the land to the place where Placidus was floating, and, taking hold of him by the hair, returned with the same speed. Being got to the land, and looking behind him, he saw he had walked upon the water, which he had not perceived till then. St. Benedict ascribes this miracle to the disciple's obedience; but St. Maurus attributed it to the command and blessing of the abbot, maintaining that he could not work a miracle without knowing it. Placidus decided the dispute by saying: "When I was taken out of the water I saw the abbot's melotes upon my head, and himself helping me out." The melotes was a sheep's skin worn by monks upon their shoulders. We must observe that St. Placidus, being very young had not yet received the monastic tonsure and habit. This miraculous corporal preservation of Placidus may be regarded as an emblem of the wonderful invisible preservation of his soul by divine grace from the spiritual shipwreck of sin. He advanced daily in holy wisdom, and in the perfect exercise of all virtues, so that his life seemed a true copy of that of his master and guide, the glorious St. Benedict; who, seeing the great progress which divine grace made in his tender heart, always loved him as one of the dearest among his spiritual children, and took him with him to Mount Cassino in 528. The senator

Tertullus, principal founder of this monastery, made them a visit soon after their arrival there, saw with pleasure the rising virtues of his son Placidus, and bestowed on St. Benedict part of the estates which he possessed in that country, and others in Sicily. The holy patriarch founded another monastery upon these latter near Messina, a great city with a fine harbour, upon the straits which part Italy from Sicily. Of this new colony St. Placidus was made abbot. Dom Rabache de Freville, the present sub-prior of St. Germain-des-Prez, in his manuscript life of St. Maurus, places the arrival of that saint at Angers in France, and the foundation of the abbey of Glenfeuil, in 543, the very year in which St. Benedict died. St. Placidus is supposed to have gone to Sicily in 541, a little before the holy patriarch's death, being about twenty-six years of age. He there founded a monastery at Messina. The spirit of the monastic state being that of penance and holy retirement, the primitive founders of this holy institute were particularly watchful entirely to shut the world out of their monasteries, and to guard all the avenues through which it could break in upon their solitude. Its breath is always poisonous to those who are called to a life of retirement. Charity may call a monk abroad to serve his neighbour in spiritual functions; but that person only can safely venture upon this external employment who is dead to the world, and who studies to preserve in it interior solitude and recollection, having his invisible food and sacred manna, and making it his delight to converse secretly in his heart with God, and to dwell in heaven. This spirit St. Placidus had learned from his great instructor, and the same he instilled into his religious brethren.* He had not lived many

* SS. Placidus, Eutychius, and thirty other martyrs are commemorated in the most pure copies of the ancient Martyrology ascribed to St. Jerom, viz. that of Lucca given by Florentinus, that of Corbie in D'Achery, (Spicil. t. 4,) that in Martenne, (Anecd. t. 3, col. 1563,) &c. also in Ado, Usuard, &c. Solier the Jesuit, (in Martyrol. Usuardi ad 5 Octob.) Chatelain, (Mart. univ.) Bue the Bollandist, (1 Octob. p. 66,) &c. think these to be ancient martyrs under the Roman Pagans. Others have confounded them with the Monks Martyrs. That a St. Placidus was a disciple of St. Benedict we are assured by St. Gregory, &c. that he was sent into Sicily is mentioned by Leo Marsicanus in the eleventh century, (in his Historia Casinensis, l. 1, c. 1,) and that he died there by martyrdom is recorded by Bertarius, abbot of Cassino, in the eleventh century, (Carmine de S. Benedicto,) by the old Martyrology of Cassino,

years in Sicily before a Pagan barbarian, with a fleet of pirates from Africa rather than from Spain then occupied by Arian Goths, not by Pagans, landed in Sicily, and out of hatred of the Christian name, and the religious profession of these ser-

(ap. Muratori, t. 7; *Rerum Ital.* Col. 935,) Mabillon. (*Iter. Ital.* t. 1, p. 144.) &c. St. Placidus is invoked in several Benedictin Litanies before the eleventh age. See Ruinart, *Apol. pro S. Placido*, § 3, Card. Bona. *Liturg.* l. 1, c. 12, n. 4. Mabillon, *Anal.* t. 2, &c. First Gelinus, after him Maurolycus, Molanus, Gelesinius, Baronius, &c. give the title of disciple of St. Benedict to St. Placidus, honoured on this day, in which the Bollandists suspect the Monks Martyrs to be substituted in modern Martyrologies in the place of the Roman Martyrs recorded in more ancient Martyrologies, seeing Usuard, Notker, &c. though monks, do not mention that circumstance; nevertheless unless some Martyrology more ancient than St. Benedict could be produced, in which St. Placidus martyr occurs, the tradition of the Benedictins, who think their St. Placidus the same, cannot be proved a mistake. At present at least the Benedictin abbot and his companions are the saints honoured in the Roman Martyrology on this day. The barbarians, by whose hands they suffered, are presumed by Mabillon to have been Scia-vini, who, in the reign of Justinian, plundered Thrace and Illyricum, as Procopius relates, l. 3, c. 38, *de bello Gothico*. Others think them Arian Goths from Spain; others Arian cruel Vandals, or pagan Moors subject to them in Africa; others Saracens; but these were not so early in that neighbourhood, and were not likely to have made a long voyage from Egypt or Arabia. The acts called the pirate Mamucha.

The monastery of Messina was soon after rebuilt; its possessions, the original gift of the senator Tertullus, in Sicily and Italy, were confirmed to it by Pope Vigilius, if Rocchus Pyrrhus (*Siciliæ sacræ*, l. 4, par. 2,) was not imposed upon by a false deed. The Saracens from Alexandria invading Sicily in 669, again destroyed this monastery of St. Placidus, and murdered all the monks; and after it had been repaired by the monks of Cassino, again destroyed it under their leader Abraham, about the year 880, as the Chronicles of Cassino relate. The monks slain there in this its third destruction, are honoured with the title of martyrs by Cajetan, (*De Sanctis Siculis*, t. 1, printed in 1610,) and by Wion, (*in Martyrol. Ben.*) on the 1st of August. In the year 1276, the bodies of St. Placidus and his companions were discovered at Messina, in the ruins of the church of that monastery, which bore the title of St. John Baptist. In 1361 certain noblemen of Messina founded the abbey of St. Placidus of Colonero, ten miles from Messina, which, in 1432, was removed to a monastery two miles from Messina. The bodies of St. Placidus and his fellow-martyrs were again discovered under the ruins of St. John Baptist's church in Messina, in 1588, known by the marks of martyrdom and the tradition of the citizens; of which several relations have been published; thirty-seven bodies of martyrs were found in one place, deposited separately, and afterwards some others, of which several relations are published. Pope Sixtus V. in 1588, and again Paul V. in 1621, ordered their festivals to be kept at Messina, &c. The relics are chiefly preserved in the priory of St. John Baptist at Messina. See the history of their discovery, &c. written at that time in Italian, and Mabillon, *Diss. des Saints inconnus*, p. 28. Also F. Bue the Bollandist, p. 103, and Baud. XIV. *De Canoniz. Santor.* l. 4, par. 2, cap. 33, p. 222.

vants of God, put St. Placidus and his fellow-monks to the sword, and burnt their monastery, about the year 546.

All true monks devote themselves to God; they separate themselves from the world, and do not entangle themselves in secular business, that they may more easily seek perfectly and with their whole hearts, not those things which are upon earth, but those which are in heaven. This is the duty of every Christian, as Origen elegantly observes,(1) and as St. Paul himself teaches,(2) according to the divine lessons of our blessed Redeemer. For to be dead to the world, and to live to Christ, is the part of all who are truly his disciples. Those who live in the world must so behave as not to be of the world. They must be assiduously conversant in prayer and other exercises of religion. Their work itself must be sanctified and dedicated to God by the like motives with which the ancient monks applied themselves to penitential manual labour,(3) or to external spiritual functions.

ST. GALLA, WIDOW.

SHE was daughter to Symmachus the Younger, the great, the most learned and virtuous patrician of Rome, whom Theodoric unjustly and barbarously put to death.* From her cradle she gave herself fervently to the service of God, and being married very young, lost her husband before the end of the first year. She could have yet pleased the world, and was strongly solicited and courted by it, but her only desire in it was to please God alone; and trampling upon the world amidst its honours and riches, she considered herself as freed by her state of widowhood from its distractions. Out of devotion to the apostles she chose for her dwelling a little cottage or cell near their tombs on the Vatican hill, where she never interrupted her devotions but by other good works. The revenues of her great estates

(1) Origen, Hom. 11, in Levit.

(2) Col. iii. 2.

(3) St. Aug. l. de Moribus Eccl. Catholicæ, c. 30, 31, et l. de Opere Monachorum; S. Hier. ep. 22, ad Eustoch. &c.

* On his extraordinary virtue and erudition, see Priscian, præf. in l. de Ponderibus et Mensuris, Procopius, l. 1, Hist. Gothorum a Grotio versæ. Boetius de Consol. Philos. l. 2, prosa 4, &c. Papebrochius in Jeanne papa 1, t. 6, Maij, p. 704.