

progress in the path of virtue. Plants always mount upwards, and never stop in their growth till they have attained to that maturity which the author of nature has prescribed: all the nourishment they receive ought to tend to this end; if any part waste itself in superfluities, this is a kind of disease. So in a Christian, every thing ought to carry him towards that perfection which the sanctity of his state requires; and every desire of his soul, every action of his life, to be a step advancing to this in a direct line. When all his inclinations have one uniform bent, and all his labours the same tendency, his progress must be great, because uninterrupted, however imperceptible it may often appear. Even his temporal affairs must be undertaken with this intention, and so conducted as to fall within the compass of this his great design. The saints so regulated all their ordinary actions, their meals, their studies, their conversation and visits, their business and toil, whether tilling a garden or superintending an estate, as to make the love of God their motive, and the accomplishment of his will their only ambition in every action. All travail which leadeth not towards this end is but so much of life mispent and lost, whatever names men may give to their political or military achievements, study of nature, knowledge of distant shores, or cunning in the mysteries of trade, or arts of conversation. Though such actions, when of duty, fall under the order of our salvation, and must be so moderated, directed, and animated with a spirit of religion, as to be made means of our sanctification. But in a Christian life the exercises of devotion, holy desires, and tender affections, which proceed from a spirit of humble compunction, and an ardent love of our Saviour, and by which a soul raises herself up to, and continually sighs after him, and what every one ought most assiduously and most earnestly to study to cultivate. By these is the soul daily more and more purified, and all her powers united to God, and made heavenly. These are properly the most sweet and beautiful flowers of paradise, or of a virtuous life.

ST. MILBURGE, V.

See Malmesb. 1. 2. de Regibus, & 1. 4. de Pontif. Angl. c. 3. Thorn's Chron. Capgrave, Harpsfield, &c.
Seventh Century.

ST. MILBURGE was sister to St. Mildred, and daughter of Merowald, son of Penda, king of Mercia. Having dedicated

herself to God in a religious state, she was chosen abbess of Wenlock, in Shropshire, which house she rendered a true paradise of all virtue. The more she humbled herself, the more she was exalted by God; and whilst she preferred sackcloth to purple and diadems, she became the invisible glory of heaven. The love of purity of heart and holy peace were the subject of her dying exhortation to her dear sisters. She closed her mortal pilgrimage about the end of the seventh century. Malmesbury and Harpsfield write that many miracles accompanied the translation of her relics, in 1101, on the 26th of May, which Capgrave and Mabillon mistake for the day of her death: but Harpsfield, who had seen the best ancient English manuscripts assures us that she died on the 23rd of February, which is confirmed by all the manuscript additions to the Martyrologies of Bede and others, in which her name occurs, which are followed by the Roman on this day. The abbey of Wenlock was destroyed by the Danes: but a monastery of Cluni-monks was afterwards erected upon the same spot, by whom her remains were discovered in a vault in 1101, as Malmesbury, who wrote not long after, relates.

B. DOSITHEUS, MONK.

From his life, by a fellow-disciple, in Bollandus, p. 38. and from S. Dorotheus, Docum. 1.

DOSITHEUS, a young man who had spent his first years in a worldly manner, and in gross ignorance of the first principles of Christianity, came to Jerusalem on the motive of curiosity to see a place he had heard frequent mention made of in common discourse. Here he became so strongly affected by the sight of a picture representing hell, and by the exposition given him of it by an unknown person, that, on the spot, he forsook the world, and entered into a monastery, where the abbot Seridon gave him the monastic habit, and recommended him to the care of one of his monks, named Dorotheus. This experienced director, sensible of the difficulty of passing from one extreme to another left his pupil at first pretty much to his own liberty in point of eating, but was particularly careful to instil into him the necessity of a perfect renunciation of his own will in every thing, both great and little. As he found his strength would permit, he daily diminished his allowance, till the quantity of six pounds