

which the people might think to be blood, this would satisfy the judges. They answered: "God forbid we should dissemble our faith." We have elsewhere taken notice that the Christians then observed in many places the positive temporary law of the apostles.(1) Thamsapor and the governor, after a short consultation, condemned both to be stoned to death by the Christians. Joseph was executed at Arbela. He was put into the ground up to the neck. The guards had drawn together five hundred Christians to his execution. The noble lady Jazdundocta was brought thither, and earnestly pressed to throw but a feather at the martyr that she might seem to obey the order of the king. But she resolutely resisted their entreaties and threats, desiring to die with the servant of God. Many, however, having the weakness to comply, a shower of stones fell upon the martyr, which put an end to his life. When he was dead, guards were set to watch his body; but the Christians found means to steal it away on the third night, during a dark tempest. St. Aithilahas suffered in the province of Beth-Nuhadra; the lord of that country, who had been a Christian, by a base apostasy, becoming one of his murderers. Saint Maruthas adds, that angels were heard singing at the place of this martyrdom, and many miracles wrought. These martyrs suffered in the year 380, the seventieth and last of the reign of Sapor, and the fortieth of his persecution. They are mentioned by Sozomen,(2) and are named in the Roman Martyrology on the 22nd of April. See their genuine Chaldaic acts by St. Maruthas in Assemani, t. 1. p. 171. Act. Martyr. Orient.

ST. BONIFACE,

BISHOP OF ROSS, IN SCOTLAND, C.

AN ardent zeal for the salvation of souls brought this servant of God from Italy to North-Britain. Near the mouth of the Tees, where he landed, he built a church under the invocation of St. Peter, another at Tellein, three miles from Alect, and a third at Restennet. This last was served by a famous monastery of regular canons of the order of Saint Austin, when religious houses were abolished in Scotland. St. Boniface, by preaching the word of God, reformed the manners of the people

(1) Acts xv. 29.

(2) B. 2. ch. 13.

in the provinces of Angus, Marris, Buchan, Elgin, Murray, and Ross. Being made bishop in this last county, he filled it with oratories and churches, and by planting the true spirit of Christ in the hearts of many, settled that church in a most flourishing condition. He died about the year 630, and was buried at Rosmark, the capital of the county of Ross. The Breviary of Aberdeen mentions that he founded one hundred and fifty churches and oratories in Scotland, and ascribes many miracles to his intercession after his death. See that Breviary, and King on this day, bishop Lesley, l. 4. Hist. Scot. and Hector Boetius, l. 9. Hist.

MARCH XV.

ST. ABRAHAM, HERMIT,

AND HIS NIECE, ST. MARY, A PENITENT.

From his life written by his friend, St. Ephrem, Op. t. 2. p. 1. Ed. nov. Vatic. See other acts of St. Abraham, given in Latin by Lipoman, 29 Oct., and by Surius, 16 March, mentioned in Greek by Lambecius, Bibl. Vind. t. 8. p. 255. 260. 266. and by Montfaucon, Bibl. Coisl. p. 211. Two other kinds of Greek Acts are found among the MSS. at the abbey of Saint Germain-des-Prez, at Paris, Bibl. Coisl. ib. See also Jos. Assemani, Bibl. Orient. t. 1. p. 38 and 396, from the Chronicle of Edessa: likewise Kohlius, *Introductio in historiam et rem literariam Sclavorum*, p. 316. Altonaviæ, A.D. 1729.

About the Year 360.

ST. ABRAHAM was born at Chidana, in Mesopotamia, near Edessa, of wealthy and noble parents, who, after giving him a most virtuous education, were desirous of engaging him in the married state. In compliance with their inclinations, Abraham took to wife a pious and noble virgin: but earnestly desiring to live and die in the state of holy virginity, as soon as the marriage ceremony and feast were over, having made known his resolution to his new bride, he secretly withdrew to a cell two miles from the city Edessa; where his friends found him at prayer after a search of seventeen days. By earnest entreaties he obtained their consent, and after their departure walled up the door of his cell leaving only a little window, through which he received what was necessary for his subsistence. He spent his whole time in adoring and praising God, and imploring his mercy. He every