

rance of the day of judgment, and of many other things. St. Gregory the Great, to whose censure the author submitted it, sent him his approbation, with high commendations, saying: "I have not found any thing but what is admirable in your writings," &c.(1) Saint Eulogius did not long survive Saint Gregory, for he died in the year 606, or, according to others, in 608.

We admire the great actions and the glorious triumphs of the saints; yet it is not so much in these that their sanctity consisted, as in the constant habitual heroic disposition of their souls. There is no one who does not sometimes do good actions; but he can never be called virtuous who does well only by humour, or by fits and starts, not by steady habits. It is an habitual poverty of spirit, humility, meekness, patience, purity, piety, and charity, which our Divine Master recommends to us. We must take due pains to plant the seeds of virtues in our souls, must watch and labour continually to improve and strengthen them, that they may be converted into nature, and be the principle by which all the affections of our souls, and all the actions of our lives are governed. If these pure heroic sentiments perfectly possess and fill our hearts, the whole tenour of our conduct, whether in private or in public life, will be an uniform train of virtuous actions, which will derive their perfection from the degree of fervour and purity from which they spring, and which, according to the essential property of virtue, is always improving, and always improvable.

#### SAINT AMATUS, B. C.

ST. AMATUS, called in French Amé, was born of a wealthy family, and had the happiness to learn the spirit of Jesus Christ, not that of the world, from the example and assiduous instructions of his pious parents. Being applied young to his studies, he discovered in them a clear apprehension, and a solid judgment; but set bounds to his curiosity in his application to profane sciences, religiously practising the maxim of Saint Jerom, that it is better never to learn what cannot be known without danger. In the mean time his ardour was unquenchable in learning the true science of the saints—that is, the

(1) St. Greg. l 8, ep. 42.

knowledge of God and himself: and in the most profound humility of heart he never ceased to ask of God the grace of his most pure and holy love. His parents were careful to fence his mind from his infancy against the love of vanity and pleasure, and against the other snares that are incident to youth; they watched to remove out of his way all dangers of bad company, and whatever could in the least sully the purity of his mind, take him off from the gravity of his deportment, and his application to his studies, or damp his ardour in the pursuit of virtue. In this they were to him themselves a constant spur, being aware that the corruption of a young man's mind in one particular, generally draws others after it, and that to fall from fervour into slackness, or into the least habitual infidelity to divine grace, is to slide insensibly, and, as it were, blindfold into the broad way of vice.

Amatus, formed by these maxims to virtue, seemed in his youth to have already attained to perfection; but this consists in more and more strenuous endeavours always to advance higher. He some time deliberated with himself what course of life to steer, in which every desire of his soul, every action of his life might be a step advancing in a direct line towards that happiness for which he was created by God; and him he consulted, by earnest and humble prayer, upon this important and critical choice. The issue of his deliberation was, that, with the consent and advice of those to whom prudence or duty obliged him to listen, he embraced an ecclesiastical state. No sooner had he from the bottom of his heart said to God that he was his portion and his inheritance for ever, but prayer, sacred studies, and exercises of charity and other virtues, became his whole employment. It was his great comfort and joy that the very habit which he wore freed him from many dangers and importunities of the world, and exempted him from visits, amusements, and idle employments, which in other states various circumstances make sometimes necessary, and which, though they may be sanctified by a good intention, yet are often dangerous, and always great consumers of the little time we have here, to purge our affections, to strengthen our souls in habits of virtue, and to lay in a due provision for eternity, by actions which are the most conducive to those great purposes.

Such being his inclinations and views, there was no danger of his entertaining any superfluous commerce with the world, by frequenting its company or amusements: a commerce always pernicious and contrary to the spirit of ecclesiastics, and which the world itself is just enough to condemn, even though by allurements it invited them into the snare. The closest retirement afforded our saint leisure and means for all those exercises of compunction, devotion, and heavenly contemplation, and for laying in a good store of sacred learning and practical knowledge, by which he qualified himself for the high functions of the ministry, to which he aspired. He prepared himself afresh for every new step in holy orders by the fervent practice of virtue, and by all suitable dispositions, that when he was raised to the priesthood he might receive the plenitude of its graces. Out of a desire of greater perfection, he took the monastic habit at Agaunum, a monastery at that time famous both for regular discipline, and the sacred studies. St. Amatus, with the leave of the abbot, dwelt in a little cell cut in a rock, with an oratory adjoining, which is now called our Lady's in the rock.

Some time after, Amatus was chosen bishop of Sion, in the Valais,\* about the year 669. In this exalted station the exam-

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\* The chronicle of Auxerre calls St. Amatus bishop of Sens, (*Senonensis*), which mistake has been followed by many, even the Bollandists, Baillet, &c. But Hucbald, a monk of St. Amand's, in the tenth age, in his life of St. Rictudes, assures us, that he was bishop of Sion (*Sedunensis*) in the Valais; and that he was abbot of St. Maurice's at Agaunum, before he was made bishop of Sion, appears from the lists and registers of both places, says Mabillon. (*Annales Bened.* t. 1, l. 16, p. 521.) This is fully proved by L'Abbé Baiffé, (*Merc. Fr.*) and the Journalists of Trevaux, for June, 1753, who draw an argument that St. Amatus came from Agaunum, because certain relics of the Theban martyrs are kept at St. Amé's church. The old *Gallia Christiana*, published in 1656, by the two brothers of Ste. Marthe, calls St. Amatus archbishop of Sens; but the new more accurate *Gallia Christiana*, compiled by the Maurist monks, D. Dennis of Ste. Marthe, D. Brice, and their associates, has in the latter volumes corrected this mistake. It is mentioned (t. 9,) that St. Amatus, bishop of Sion, was banished by King Theodoric, at the instigation of Ebroin, and was received at St. Fursey's in Peronne, by St. Ultan, who was made first abbot of that house in 409. It is related in the tenth tome, printed in 1751, that St. Bainus, fifth bishop of the Morini or Tarvanne, performed the translation of the body of St. Amatus, formerly bishop of Sion, who died in 690, and who was buried at Breuill, in Latin Brofflus, otherwise called Maurontivilla and Merinvilla, now called by the French Merville, and by the Flemings Mergem, on the Ila-

ple of his virtue shone forth with new lustre, and greater authority; he was enabled to deal his alms more plentifully among the poor, and was furnished with the means of every way exerting his zeal more powerfully in advancing the divine honour, and the spiritual good of souls. He preached, instructed, comforted, and relieved all persons according to their particular necessities. In a word, he was an accomplished pastor, sanctifying both himself and those who were committed to his charge. He had governed his diocese almost five years, when the devil, jealous of the victories which the holy pastor daily gained over his empire, stirred up against him certain wicked instruments, who could not bear in others that virtue which they had not courage to practise themselves.

Theodoric III., son of Clovis II., king, first of Austrasia, afterwards of all France, was for several years abandoned to vice and evil counsellors, and is the first of those who, governing by the mayors of his palace, are called by some historians the Idle Kings. Ebroin, mayor of his palace, was one of the wickedest tyrants that ever had any share in the administration of the French kingdom; the murder of St. Leodegarius, and the persecution and banishment of many other holy bishops and saints, of which he was the author, are instances of his injustice, cruelty, and irreligion. The enemies of St. Amatus found it an easy matter to accuse him before such a king, and such a minister, of crimes which had not the least foundation in truth; some say, of accusing Ebroin of tyranny. Theodoric, without further examination, or so much as allowing the holy man a hearing, banished him to St. Fursey's monastery at Peronne, where St. Ultan, the abbot, treated him with all imaginable respect and veneration. The holy exile rejoiced in his disgrace to find the tranquillity of holy retirement, in which he enjoyed a sweet calm, with the happy means of living to himself and God, conversing always in heaven, and giving

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D. Henry, and D. Tachereau, the present learned Maurist continuators of *Gallia Christiana*, prove more fully that St. Amatus was the sixteenth bishop of Sion, which also appears from F. Bucelin's *Germania Sacra*, Snulder's *Vallesia Sacra*, Briguet's *Vallesia Christiana*, Murer's *Helvetia Sacra*, &c.; nor is his name found in the ancient catalogues of the archbishops of Sens, as those of Fontenelle and the Vatican, both compiled in the tenth age.

free scope to his zeal in the practice of the most rigorous penitential austerities. The flagrant injustice that was done him never drew from him the least complaint, though no synod had been assembled to hear him, no sentence of deposition issued out, no crime so much as laid to his charge in a juridical manner. The only circumstance which afflicted him was to see a wolf intruded by the king into his see, not to feed, but to devour his flock.

After the death of St. Ultan, St. Mauront was charged with the custody of St. Amatus, and took him first to the monastery of Hamaye; but soon after built a new abbey upon an estate of his own, at a place called Bréüil, or Broile, now Merville, (that is, Little Town,) upon the Lis, in Flanders. St. Amatus removed with him to Bréüil. St. Mauront rejoiced to be possessed of such a guest, and resigned to him the government of that abbey. St. Amatus, both by words and example, excited the monks to fervour and humility, and having settled the house in excellent order, shut himself up in a little cell near the church, in which he occupied his soul with so much ardour in heavenly contemplation, as scarcely to seem to be any longer an inhabitant of the earth. Thus he lived five years with these monks, and only left them to become an intercessor with Christ in his glory for them, about the year 690. Ebroin, who had sacrificed many innocent bishops and noblemen to his cruel policy, was himself massacred in 679. King Theodoric died in 691, but entering into himself some time before his death, had severely condemned himself for having unjustly persecuted St. Amatus, and in satisfaction made several donations to the abbey of Bréüil. Gramaye takes this house to have been a community of secular priests; but that they were monks is evident, since the Capuchin friars, in digging up the ground, found remains of their bodies buried in the monastic habit, as Castillon remarks.(1) In the incursions of the Normans these monks retired with the relics of St. Amatus, first to Soissons, but soon after to Douay.\* This translation was

(1) Chronol. Belg. in Duaco, pp. 38, 39.

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\* Some improbably pretend that Douay was the metropolis of the Cantuari in Cæsar's time, as Guicciardin takes notice. Huchald, and several other writers quoted by Gramaye, testify, that Douay was the patri-

made on the 1st of May, in 870, by Eruannicus, abbot of Breüil, and St. Bainus, fifth bishop of Tervanthe,(1) when these relics were deposited in the chapel which St. Mauront had built in honour of St. Amatus, soon after his death, in the church of our Lady, which, four years after, began to be called St. Amatus's, or St. Amé's, when these monks obtained of John, bishop of Arras and Cambray, King Charles the Bald, and Baldwin I, surnamed the Iron-armed, (who had been made by that prince sovereign count of Flanders and Artois, or the Morini,) proper authority to remove from Breüil, and fix their residence at this church in Douay. The monastery thus settled at Douay, was secularised, and converted into a college of canons in 940. A priory and a holy chapel subsisted long after this at Breüil, on the spot where St. Mauront received St. Amatus, and where both led an anchoretical life. The land to this day belongs to this church of St. Amatus, or Amé, in Douay. The relics of St. Mauront were translated to St. Amé's, in Douay, from Marchiennes, in 1485. See the life of St. Amatus, written before the translation of his relics, or the destruction of the monastery of Breüil, or Merinville, or Merville. Also Bulteau, l. 3, c. 36, Gramaye, Antiqu. Duac., p. 202. Castillion, Chronol. Eccl. Belgic. seu Episc. Belgic. in Duaco, p. 38, 39, and D. Henry and D. Tache-reau, in the last part of Gallia Christiana, and the Bollandists, p. 120—133.

(1) Gallia Christiana, t. 10, col. 1531.

mony of St. Rictudes, and that her husband, Adalbold, the most noble duke, founded there the church of our Lady, now called of St. Amé, and rebuilt upon the same hill, a castle which was fallen to decay. From this time Douay was called a castle, and always mentioned as a place of strength. St. Mauront gave this hill and church to the monks of Breüil, but the castle was kept by the lords, afterwards counts, of Ostrevant, with the title of Advocates of this abbey and church. This was called the castle of Douay, and the quarter about St. Albin's church, Old Douay. The town on the other side of the Scarp was built afterwards, and called New Douay. At that time Lambras, now a small village, a mile from Douay, was the most considerable place in the territory of Ostrevant, famous for its mart, its harbour or station for boats on the river, the royal treasury, &c. Meierus says Douay was destroyed by the Normans and Danes in 879; but it soon recovered itself, has been ever since one of the most considerable towns in Flanders, and was for some time the residence of the sovereign counts of Flanders. The collegiate church of St. Peter was founded by those counts in the twelfth century. See Gramaye, Antiquitates Flandriæ, in Duaco, p. 201. Castillion, Chronol. Sacra Belgii, p. 39.