

in 1672. It was this prince who himself afterwards disclosed all the circumstances of the fact which we have here related.

His miracles were not less remarkable than the other extraordinary favours he received from God. Many sick owed their recovery to his prayers. The saint falling sick of a fever at Osimo, the 10th of August, 1663, foretold that his last hour was near at hand. The day before his death he received the holy viaticum, and after it the extreme unction. He was heard often to repeat those aspirations of a heart inflamed with the love of God: "Oh! that my soul was freed from the shackles of my body, to be reunited to Jesus Christ! Praise and thanksgiving be to God! The will of God be done. Jesus crucified, receive my heart, and kindle in it the fire of your holy love." He died the 18th of September, 1663, at the age of sixty years and three months. His body was exposed in the church, and the whole town came to visit it with respect; he was afterwards buried in the chapel of the Conception. The heroism of his virtues being proved, and the truth of his miracles attested, he was beatified by Benedict XIV. in 1753, and canonized by Clement XIII. in 1767. Clement XIV. inserted his office in the Roman Breviary. See the Life of St. Joseph of Cupertino, written in Italian, by Count Dominic Bernini in 1722, and dedicated to Innocent XIII. Agelli has given an abridgment of it in 1753, with an account of twenty-two new miracles. We have another abridgment of the life of this saint by Pastrovicchi, also in 1753. See also F. Suysken, Comment. et Not. p. 992.

SEPTEMBER XIX

ST. JANUARIUS, BISHOP OF BENEVENTO, AND HIS COMPANIONS, MARTYRS.

From Bede and other Martyrologists. The modern acts of St. Januarius were compiled by John, a deacon belonging to the church of Naples, about the year 920, who complains that the memoirs he made use of had been adulterated by certain superfluous circumstances foisted into them. See Tillemont, t. 5, and F. Putignano Soc. J. Redivivo, Sanguine D. Januarii, Neapoli, 1723, in three volumes quarto, Stillington, t. 6, Sept. p. 762, et seq.

A. D. 305.

ST. JANUARIUS, a native some say of Naples, others of Benevento, was bishop of this latter city, when the persecution of

Dioclesian broke out. Sosius, deacon of Miseno,* Proculus, deacon of Puzzuoli, and Eutyches, or Eutychetes, and Acutius, eminent laymen, were imprisoned at Puzzuoli for the faith, by an order of Dracontius, governor of Campania, before whom they had confessed their faith. Sosius, by his singular wisdom and sanctity, had been worthy of the intimate friendship of St. Januarius, who reposed in him an entire confidence, and for many years had found no more solid comfort among men than in his holy counsels and conversation. Upon the news that this great servant of God and several others were fallen into the hands of the persecutors, the good bishop determined to make them a visit, in order to comfort and encourage them, and provide them with every spiritual succour to arm them for their great conflict; in this act of charity no fear of torments or danger of his life could terrify him; and martyrdom was his recompence. He did not escape the notice of the inquisitive keepers, who gave information that an eminent person from Benevento had visited the Christian prisoners. Timothy, who had just succeeded Dracontius in the government of that district of Italy, gave orders that Januarius, whom he found to be the person, should be apprehended, and brought before him at Nola, the usual place of his residence; which was done accordingly. Festus, the bishop's deacon, and Desiderius, a lector of his church, were taken up as they were making him a visit. They had a share in the interrogatories and torments which the good bishop underwent at Nola. Some time after the governor went to Puzzuoli, and these three confessors, loaded with heavy irons, were made to walk before his chariot to that town, where they were thrown into the same prison where the four martyrs already mentioned were detained: they had been condemned, by an order from the emperor, to be torn in pieces by wild beasts, and were then lying in expectation of the execution of their sentence.† The day after the arrival of St. Ja-

* Formerly an episcopal city on a promontory, two miles from Baie, three from Puzzuoli, now in ruins.

† The ruins of the amphitheatre at Puzzuoli show how magnificent and famous a place this was for such barbarous diversion. The situation of Puzzuoli was so delightful that Cicero, Hortensius, Piso, Marius, Cæsar, Pompey, Nero, &c. had country-houses there. St. Proculus's church at Puzzuoli was originally a temple built by Calphurnius in honour of Augustus.

nuarius and his two companions, all these champions of Christ were exposed to be devoured by the beasts in the amphitheatre; but none of the savage animals could be provoked to touch them. The people were amazed, but imputed their preservation to art-magic, and the martyrs were condemned to be beheaded. This sentence was executed near Puzzuoli, as Bede testifies, and the martyrs were decently interred near that town. Some time after the Christian faith had become triumphant, towards the year 400, their precious relics were removed. The bodies of SS. Proculus, Eutyches, and Acutius were placed in a more honourable manner at Puzzuoli: those of SS. Festus and Desiderius were translated to Benevento: that of Sosius to Miseno, where it was afterwards deposited in a stately church built in his honour.

The city of Naples was so happy as to get possession of the relics of St. Januarius. During the wars of the Normans they were removed, first to Benevento, and some time after, to the abbey of Monte-Vergine; but, in 1497, they were brought back to Naples, which city has long honoured him as principal patron. Among many miraculous deliverances which it ascribes to the intercession of this great saint, none is looked upon as more remarkable than its preservation from the fiery eruptions of Mount Vesuvius, now called La Somma, which is only eight miles distant, and which has often threatened the entire destruction of this city, both by the prodigious quantities of burning sand, ashes, and stones, which it throws up on those occasions to a much greater distance than Naples; and, by a torrent of burning sulphur, nitre, calcined stones, and other materials, which like a liquid fire has sometimes gushed from that volcano, and, digging itself a channel, (which has sometimes been two or three miles broad,) rolled its flaming waves through the valley into the sea, destroying towns and villages in its way, and often passing near Naples.* Some of these eruptions, which in the fifth and seventh centuries threatened this city with destruction, by the clouds of ashes which they raised, are said to have

* See the description of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in the year 1707, in the Philosophical Transactions, No. 354, that of Mount Ætna, in 1669, given by Borelli in a particular history thereof, with a philosophical account of volcanoes, &c.

darkened the sky as far as Constantinople, and struck terror into the inhabitants of that capital.(1) The intercession of St. Januarius was implored at Naples on those occasions, and the divine mercy so wonderfully interposed in causing these dreadful evils suddenly to cease thereupon, especially in 685, Bennet II. being pope, and Justinian the Younger emperor, that the Greeks instituted a feast in honour of St. Januarius, with two yearly solemn processions to return thanks to God. The protection of the city of Naples from this dreadful volcano by the same means was most remarkable in the years 1631 and 1707. In this last, whilst Cardinal Francis Pignatelli, with the clergy and people, devoutly followed the shrine of St. Januarius in procession to a chapel at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, the fiery eruption ceased, the mist, which before was so thick that no one could see another at the distance of three yards, was scattered, and at night the stars appeared in the sky.(2)

The standing miracle, as it is called by Baronius, of the blood of St. Januarius liquefying and boiling up at the approach of the martyr's head, is likewise very famous. In a rich chapel, called the Treasury, in the great church at Naples, are preserved the blood, in two very old glass vials, and the head of St. Januarius. The blood is congealed, and of a dark colour; but, when brought in sight of the head, though at a considerable distance, it melts, bubbles up, and, upon the least motion, flows on any side. The fact is attested by Baronius, Ribadeneira, and innumerable other eye-witnesses of all nations and religions, many of whom most attentively examined all the circumstances. Certain Jesuits, sent by F. Bollandus to Naples, were allowed by the archbishop, Cardinal Philamurini, to see this prodigy; the minute description of the manner in which it is performed is related by them in the life of F. Bollandus.(3) It happens equally in all seasons of the year, and in variety of circumstances. The usual times when it is performed are the feast of St. Januarius, the 19th of September; that of the translation of his relics (when they were brought from Puzzuoli to Naples) the Sunday which falls next to the calends of May; and the

(1) See Marcellin. in Chron. ad ann. 471. An ancient homily quoted by Baronius, Baillet, and Putignano.

(2) See F. Putignano, t. 3, p. 153, and t. 2, p. 61.

(3) Vita Patris Bollandi, t. 1, Martil.

20th day of December, on which, in 1631, a terrible eruption of Mount Vesuvius was extinguished, upon invoking the patronage of this martyr. The same is done on extraordinary occasions at the discretion of the archbishop.* This miraculous solution and ebullition of the blood of St. Januarius are mentioned by Pope Pius II. when he speaks of the reign of Alphonsus I. of Arragon, king of Naples, in 1450: Angelus Cato, an eminent physician of Salerno, and others mention it in the same century. Almost two hundred years before that epoch, historians take notice that King Charles I. of Anjou coming to Naples, the archbishop brought out the head and blood of this martyr. The continuator of the chronicle of Maraldus says the same was done upon the arrival of King Roger, who venerated these relics, in 1140. Falco of Benevento relates the same thing. From several circumstances this miracle is traced much higher, and it is said to have regularly happened on the annual feast of St. Januarius, and on that of the translation of his relics, from the time of that translation, about the year 400.(1)

Miracles recorded in holy scripture are revealed facts, and an object of faith. Other miracles are not considered in the same light; neither does our faith rest upon them as upon the former, though they illustrate and confirm it; nor do they demand or admit any higher assent than that which prudence requires, and

(1) See Julius Cæsar Capacius, in his Neapolitan History, l. 2, Summontius, in his History of Naples; Chissecarelli, l. De Neapolitanis Episcopis.

* See this miracle defended by Cardinal Lambertini, afterwards Pope Benedict XIV. De Canoniz. l. 4, par. 1, c. 31, by Melchior Corneus, in Defens. Mir. adversus Danhawerum, p. 37, and in the notes in Musantii Chron. p. 193. Mr. Addison, Dr. Middleton, and several German Protestants have tried their skill in forming objections to this miracle, which some of them would fain ascribe to the heat of the priest's hands, others to the steams of the church or lamps, others think it may be some chymical composition of a soluble nature. See Danhawerus, and Bibliothec. German. t. 29, ann. 1734. All these surmises suppose a fraud or jugglery in the priests; but how will these authors persuade us that so many most holy, venerable, and learned persons have been and are hypocrites, impostors, and jugglers? The chymical secret would be not only a notorious fraud but also a wonderful discovery. The variation of the circumstances in which this miracle happens, removes the suspicion of this or such causes as the heat of hands, and the steams of the place. Nor can these be altered by the head being present, &c. That the ancient Christians often respectfully preserved the blood of martyrs in vials, is demonstrable from all authors who have written on the ancient cemeteries.

that which is due to the evidence or human authority upon which they depend. When such miracles are propounded, they are not to be rashly admitted: the evidence of the fact and circumstances ought to be examined to the bottom, and duly weighed: where that fails it is the part of prudence to suspend or refuse our assent. Also if it appears doubtful whether an effect be natural or proceed from a supernatural interposition, our assent ought to lean according to the greater weight of probability, and God, who is author of all events, natural and supernatural, is always to be glorified. If human evidence set the certainty of a miracle above the reach of any doubt, it must more powerfully excite us to raise our minds to God in sentiments of humble adoration, love, and praise; and to honour him in his saints, when by such wonderful means he gives us sensible proofs of the glory and favour to which he exalts them, and of the tenderness with which he watches over their mortal remains to raise them one day in a state of glorious immortality.

ST. THEODORE, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, C.

AFTER the death of St. Deusdedit, archbishop of Canterbury, Oswi, king of Northumberland, and Egbert, king of Kent, sent a virtuous and learned priest, named Wighard, to Rome, that he might be consecrated bishop, and duly confirmed to that important see by the pope himself. Wighard and most of those who attended him died in Italy of the plague; and Vitalian, who then sat in St. Peter's chair, pitched upon Adrian, abbot of Niridian, near Naples, to be raised to that dignity. This abbot was by birth an African, understood Greek and Latin perfectly well, and was thoroughly versed in theology, and in the monastic and ecclesiastical discipline. But so great were his fears of the dignity to which he was called, that the pope was compelled by his entreaties and tears to yield to his excuses. He insisted, however, that Adrian should find a person equal to that charge, and should himself attend upon and assist him in instructing the inhabitants of this remote island in the perfect discipline of the Church. How edifying and happy was this contention—not to obtain—but to shun such a dignity! Adrian first named to the pope a monk called Andrew; but he was