

which subsisted till the sixth century, as appears from Agathias,<sup>1</sup> but was extirpated by the Mahometans when they became masters of the country. The Christians always interred their dead in Persia, as in other countries. The bodies of these three martyrs were conveyed to the castle of Malcan, and deposited in a tomb prepared for them. The inhabitants attributed to the blessing of God for the sake of his martyrs, that the Sabæan Arabs who had often infested that country, never made their appearance there from that time. These martyrs suffered in the year 341, the 32d of Sapor II. on the 13th day of the moon of November, which that year was the 5th of November, according to the solar computation. The Roman Martyrology joins these with several other Persian martyrs on the 22d of April: the Grecian Menæa mentions them on the 10th of November, which was perhaps the day of their burial. See their genuine Chaldaic Acts, with the notes of Monsignor Steph.

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#### NOVEMBER XI.

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#### ST. MARTIN, BISHOP OF TOURS, C.<sup>2</sup>

THE great St. Martin, the glory of Gaul, and the light of the Western Church in the fourth age, was a native of Sabaria, a town of Upper

<sup>1</sup> L. 2. p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> For the history of St. Martin, we are chiefly indebted to his illustrious disciple St. Sulpicius Severus, who, in an elegant and classical style wrote his life some time before his death. The name of Constantius for Constantine, and some other such mistakes, crept into this work through the negligence of copiers, who often use abbreviations, especially in names. To supply omissions in this life, eight years after St. Martin's death, St. Sulpicius wrote three dialogues; in the first, Posthumian introduces the discourse by relating certain miracles and edifying instances of virtue, especially of the love of poverty, and the blind obedience of several Egyptian monks.

Pannonia, the ruins of which appear upon the river Gunez, in Lower Hungary, two leagues from Sarwar, upon the Raab, near the confines of Austria and Stiria.) St Gregory of Tours places his birth in the year 316, or before Easter in 317, the eleventh of Constantine the Great. His parents carried him with them in his infancy to Pavia in Italy, whither they removed, and the saint had his education in that city. His father was an officer in the army, and rose to the commission of a military tribune, not much different from that of a colonel, or rather of a brigadier amongst us. Our saint from his infancy seemed animated with the spirit of God, and to have no relish for any thing but for his service, though his parents were idolaters. At ten years of age he made his way to the church against the will of his parents, and desired to be enrolled amongst the catechumens. His request was granted, and he assisted as often as possible at the instructions that were given to such at the church: by which he conceived so ardent a love of God, that at twelve years of age, he was for retiring into the desert; and would have done it had not the tenderness of his age hindered him. His heart, however, was always set upon the church and monasteries. An imperial order being issued to oblige the sons of veteran officers and soldiers to bear arms, the saint's own father, who very much desired that his son should follow that profession, discovered him, and at fifteen years of age he was compelled to take the military oath, and was entered in the cavalry. He contented himself with one servant, and him he treated as if he were his equal: they ate together, and the master frequently performed for him the lowest offices. All the time he remained in the army, he kept himself free from those vices which too frequently sully and degrade that profession, and, by his virtue, goodness, and charity, gained the love and esteem

of all his companions. He was humble and patient above what human nature seemed capable of, though he was not yet baptized. He comforted all those that suffered affliction, and relieved the distressed, reserving to himself out of his pay only what was sufficient for his daily support.

Of his compassion and charity St. Sulpicius has recorded the following illustrious example. One day in the midst of a very hard winter and severe frost, when many perished with cold, as he was marching with other officers and soldiers, he met at the gate of the city of Amiens a poor man, almost naked, trembling and shaking with cold, and begging alms of those that passed by. Martin seeing those that went before him take no notice of this miserable object, thought he was reserved for himself: by his charities to others he had nothing left but his arms and clothes upon his back; when drawing his sword, he cut his cloak into two pieces, gave one to the beggar, and wrapped himself in the other half. Some of the by-standers laughed at the figure he made in that dress, whilst others were ashamed not to have relieved the poor man. In the following night St. Martin saw in his sleep Jesus Christ dressed in that half of the garment which he had given away, and was bid to look at it well, and asked whether he knew it. He then heard Jesus say to a troop of angels that surrounded him: "Martin yet a catechumen, has clothed me with this garment." This vision inspired the saint with fresh ardour, and determined him speedily to receive baptism, which he did in the eighteenth year of his age; but still continued almost two years in the army at the request of his tribune, with whom he lived in the most intimate friendship, and who promised to renounce the world when the term of the service and commission in which he was then employed, should be

elapsed. During this interval Martin was so entirely taken up with the obligations of his baptism, that he had little more than the name of a soldier, and expressed much impatience at being detained one moment from devoting himself solely to the divine service. Upon an irruption which the Germans made into Gaul, the troops were assembled to march against them, and a donative was distributed amongst the soldiers. Martin thought it would be ungenerous and unjust to receive the donative when he had thoughts of quitting the service. He therefore begged that his donative might be bestowed on some other person, and asked his dismissal, that he might give himself up totally to the service of Christ. He was told that it was for fear of the battle that was expected next day, that he desired his dismissal. Martin, with surprising intrepidity, offered to be placed in the front without arms, saying, "In the name of the Lord Jesus, and protected not by a helmet and buckler, but by the sign of the cross, I will thrust myself into the thickest squadrons of the enemy without fear." That night the barbarians demanded and obtained peace; upon which Martin easily procured leave to retire, after having served in the army about five years, according to the most probable accounts.<sup>1</sup>

St. Martin having quitted the camp, went to St. Hilary who had been made bishop of Poitiers in the year 353 or 354. That great prelate soon became acquainted with the saint's extraordinary merit, and, in order to fix him in his diocese, would fain have ordained him deacon, but was not able to overcome his humility, and was

<sup>1</sup> Either he must have served in the army much longer, or rather his birth must have happened several years later than it is placed by St. Gregory of Tours, if the general of whom he obtained his commission was Julian Cæsar, who was raised to that dignity, and sent to command in Gaul, in November, in 355, where he continued till 361.

obliged to be content only to make him exorcist. Martin was very desirous to pay his parents a visit in Pannonia; for which he obtained the leave of St. Hilary, who made him promise he would return to him again. In crossing the Alps he fell into the hands of a company of robbers, and one of them lifted up his sword over his head to kill him; but another held his arm. They admired his modesty and intrepidity, and asked him who he was, and whether he was not struck with fear at the sight of a sword lifted up to kill him. He answered that he was a Christian, and that he had never been more calm and secure than under that danger, because certainly he knew that the divine goodness is always most ready to protect us in life or in death, and is never more present to us than in the greatest dangers; but said he was only grieved that they, by the lives which they led, deprived themselves of the mercy of Christ. The robbers listened to him, admired the courage and confidence in God which virtue inspires, and he who had attempted to kill the saint put him in his road, became a Christian, led a penitential religious life in a monastery, and himself afterward related this circumstance. Martin continued his journey through Milan into Pannonia, and converted his mother and many others; but his father remained in his infidelity. In Illyricum he with so much zeal opposed the Arians who prevailed there without control, that he was publicly scourged by them and banished the country. In Italy he heard that the Church of Gaul was sorely oppressed by those heretics, and St. Hilary banished: upon which melancholy news he chose a retreat near the walls of Milan, where he entered upon a monastic life. Auxentius the Arian invader of the see of Milan, soon became acquainted with his zeal for the orthodox faith, and the council of Nice, and drove him out of

that diocess. The saint in this distress fell into the company of a very virtuous priest, with whom he agreed to retire to the little desert island of Gallinaria, upon the coast of Liguria, near Albenga. Here, whilst he lived in great abstinence, on roots and wild herbs, he happened unawares to eat a considerable quantity of hellebore, enough to have caused his death, if he had not been restored to his health when brought to the last extremity, by having recourse to prayer. Understanding, in 360, that St. Hilary was returning to his bishopric, he went to Rome to meet him on his road, and finding there that he was already gone by, speedily followed and overtook him, and being most affectionately received by him, accompanied him to Poitiers. It being Martin's earnest desire to pursue his vocation in holy solitude, St. Hilary gave him a little spot of land, called Locociagum, now Lugugé, two leagues from the city, where our saint built a monastery which was standing in the eighth century, and seems to have been the first that was erected in Gaul. Amongst others who were received by the saint in this house, was a certain catechumen, who, shortly after, whilst St. Martin was absent for three days upon business relating to the divine service, fell ill of a fever, and died suddenly, beyond all expectation, and without baptism. The saint returning home found his monks in great affliction, and the corpse laid out in order to be buried. Bursting into a flood of tears he fixed his eyes on the corpse; and feeling in himself a divine impulse to work a miracle, he ordered the rest to go out of the chamber, and, like another Eliseus, stretched himself upon the dead body, and prayed for some time with great earnestness, till perceiving that it began to revive, he rose up and stood by it, whilst, in less than two hours, the deceased person began to move his limbs, and at last opened his eyes. Being re-



stored to life he related how, after his departure, his soul seemed to be presented before the divine tribunal and sentenced to a dark dungeon, but that two angels represented to the judge that St. Martin poured forth his prayers in her behalf; and that the judge ordered them to restore her to the body, and raise it to life. The person was immediately baptized, and lived many years. Another time the saint restored to life, in the same manner, a slave of a neighbouring rich man, who had hanged himself. These two miracles exceedingly spread his reputation, and in the year 371 he was chosen the third bishop of Tours, and consecrated on the 3d of July. St. Gatian who came from Rome about the same time with St. Dionysius of Paris, in 250, had first preached the faith there, founded that see, and governed it fifty years, as St. Gregory of Tours affirms. His successor, after the see had been several years vacant, was St. Litorius: upon whose death the people demanded St. Martin for their bishop. A stratagem was made use of to call him to the door of his monastery to give his blessing to a sick person, and he was forcibly conveyed to Tours under a strong guard. Some of the neighbouring bishops, who were called to assist at the election, urged that the meanness of his dress and appearance, and his slovenly air, showed him to be unfit for such a dignity. But such objections were commendations of the servant of God, who was enstalled in the episcopal chair.

St. Martin in this new dignity continued the same manner of life, retaining the same humility of mind, austerity of life and meanness of dress. He lived at first in a little cell near the church, but, not being able to endure the interruption which he met with from the many visits he there received, he retired to a monastery which he built two miles from the city, which is the

famous abbey of Marmoutier, the most ancient that now subsists in France, and belongs to the congregation of St. Maur. The place was then a desert, inclosed by a high steep rock on one side, and by the river Loire on the other, and the entrance into it was only by one very narrow passage. The holy bishop had a cell built of wood: several of his monks had cells made in the same manner, but the greater part took up their dwellings in narrow holes which they dug in the side of the rock: one is still shown in which St. Martin is said to have lodged for some time. He had here in a short time about fourscore monks; amongst them no one had any distinct property: no one was allowed to buy or sell, as was the practice of the greater part of the monks with regard to their work and sustenance. No art or business was permitted amongst them, except that of writing, to which only the younger were deputed: the more ancient attended to nothing else but to prayer and spiritual functions. Very rarely any went out of his cell, except to the oratory where they assembled at the hours of public prayer; and they ate all together in the evening after the hour of the fast. Wine was never afforded to any one, unless sickness required it. Most of them had garments of camel's hair, that is, of coarse camlet, and it was esteemed a crime to wear any soft clothing. There were nevertheless, many persons of quality amongst them, who had been educated in a tender and delicate manner. Many bishops were chosen out of this monastery; for there was not a city which did not desire to have a pastor who had been bred under the discipline of St. Martin. The bishop himself was frequently employed in visiting all the parts of his diocess. Not far from his monastery stood a chapel and an altar, erected by the concession of his predecessors, over the tomb of a pretended martyr. The place was much rever-



enced by the people: but St. Martin, who was not over-credulous, would not go thither to pray, not hearing any assured account of the relics. He asked the eldest of the clergy what they knew of them, and not receiving satisfaction, he went one day to the place with some of his brethren, and, standing over the tomb, besought God to show him who was buried there. Then turning to the left he saw near him a pale ghost of a fierce aspect, whom he commanded to speak. The ghost told his name, and it appeared that he had been a robber who was executed for his crimes, whom the people had honoured as a martyr. None but St. Martin saw him: the rest only heard his voice. He thereupon caused the altar to be removed, and freed the people from this superstition.<sup>1</sup> Formerly bishops canonized saints, or declared them such; but, to prevent the danger of abuses, this has been long since reserved to the most mature discussion and solemn approbation of the apostolic see of Rome. To honour relics without a prudent or moral assurance of their authenticity, or without the due authority of pastors as the canons require, is to fall into superstition. Where these rules of prudence are observed, even though a mistake should happen, it is of the same nature as if a person by inculpable inadvertence, kissed some other book instead of the bible; and the primary object of such religious actions, which is to glorify God in his saints, is always certain, whatever mistakes may happen in facts, or such like human means which excite our devotion. But the example of St. Martin, St. Gregory the Great, St. Charles Borromeo, and all other holy prelates ought to excite all pastors to be diligent and severe in examining and removing relics which are not sufficiently warranted.

<sup>1</sup> Suip. Sev. in vit. S. Mart. c. 11. p. 210.

The utter extirpation of idolatry out of the diocess of Tours and all that part of Gaul, was the fruit of the edifying piety, miracles, and zealous labours and instructions of St. Martin. Soon after he had entered upon his episcopal charge he was obliged (probably on account of the heathenish temples, or some such affairs) to repair to the court of Valentinian I. who generally resided in Gaul. That prince, who was a good soldier, was a most passionate, rough and proud man, and though he had been remarkable for his zeal in the reign of Julian the Apostate, seemed on certain occasions afterward too favourable to idolatry, or too indifferent about religion, as appears amongst other instances from the following: The Church never admitted comedians to baptism till they had quitted that profession, so that the pagans dreaded lest any of their comedians should turn Christians, as a prejudice to their public diversions. Valentinian therefore decreed that if any comedians in sickness desired baptism, the magistrates should be informed, that they might cause them to be visited, and see if they were really in danger, before they were allowed to be baptized.<sup>1</sup> This prince, knowing that St. Martin was come to beg of him something in favour of the Christian religion which he had no mind to grant, gave orders that he should not be admitted into the palace. Also his wife Justina, who was a furious Arian, endeavoured to prepossess him against the holy bishop. St. Martin, having attempted in vain twice or thrice to get access, had recourse to his ordinary weapons. He put on hair cloth, covered his head with ashes, abstained from eating and drinking, and prayed day and night. On the seventh day he was ordered by an angel to go boldly to the palace. Accordingly he went thither, found the doors open,

<sup>1</sup> L. Cod. Theod. de Scen. lib. 15. i

and nobody stopping him, he went to the emperor, who seeing him at a distance, asked in a passion why they had let him in, and would not vouchsafe to rise: but the place where he sat was suddenly all in a flame; which soon forced him to get up, says Sulpicius Severus. Then finding that he had felt the divine power, he embraced the saint several times, and granted him all that he desired, even before he had time to mention his request. After this, he gave him audience several times, often made him eat at his table, and, at his departure, offered him great presents, which the saint modestly refused, out of love to the poverty he professed. This must have happened before the year 375, in which this emperor died.

St. Martin destroyed many temples of idols and felled several trees that were held as sacred by the pagans. Having demolished a very ancient temple, he would also have cut down a pine that stood near it. The chief priest and other pagans opposed; but at length agreed that they themselves would fell it, upon condition that he who trusted so strongly in the God whom he preached would stand under it where he should place him. The saint, who was directed in these extraordinary events by a divine inspiration, consented, and suffered himself to be tied to that side of the tree on which it leaned. When it seemed just ready to fall upon him, he made the sign of a cross and it fell on the contrary side. There was not one in a prodigious multitude of pagans that were present, who did not upon the spot demand the imposition of hands in order to be received amongst the catechumens. Another time, as he was pulling down a temple in the country of *Ædui*, that is in the territory of Autun, a great number of pagans fell upon him with great fury,

and one attacked him sword in hand. The saint took away his mantle, and presented his bare neck to him: but the pagan, being miraculously terrified, fell backwards, and begged he would forgive him. His zeal exposed him on many occasions to the hazard of his life. Wherever he destroyed temples, he immediately built churches or monasteries; and continued frequently to perform great miracles. At Triers he cured a maid who was sick of a palsy, and just ready to expire, by putting some oil that was blessed into her mouth. He restored to health a slave who belonged to Tetradius, formerly proconsul, that was possessed with a devil. At Paris, as he entered the gate of the city, followed by a great crowd, he kissed a most loathsome leper, and gave him his blessing, and he was forthwith healed. Small threads of the clothes or hair shirt of St. Martin often cured the sick when applied to them. One time the saint, as he was going to Chartres, passed through a village, the inhabitants of which were all idolaters, yet they all came out to see him pass by. The holy prelate seeing this multitude of infidels was moved with extreme compassion, and with earnest affection lifted up his eyes to heaven. Then he began to preach to them the word of God in the manner that he was accustomed, and sweetly to invite them to eternal salvation, with such pathetic words, voice, and energy, that it appeared plainly that it was not he who spoke, but God in him. A woman brought to him at that very time her only son, a child who was dead, and besought him, as the friend of God, to restore him to life. The saint judging that this miracle might occasion the conversion of many, made his prayer, and, in the presence of all the people, restored the child alive to the mother, who was amazed and out of herself for joy. The people who had seen this miracle, cried out aloud to heaven, ran to the saint, and

themselves at his feet, beseeching him to make them catechumens, and to prepare them for baptism. St. Martin rejoiced at the conversion of so many souls to God, much more than any one could have done for the conquest of a kingdom, or all temporal advantages. Paulinus, who flourished with so great reputation for sanctity at Nola, being seized with a violent pain in his eye, where a cataract was beginning to be formed, St. Martin touched him with a pencil, and he was immediately cured.<sup>1</sup> Many other miracles wrought by St. Martin are related by St. Sulpicius Severus, especially in casting out devils, whom he did not expel with threats and terrors as other exorcists were accustomed to do; but clothed with rough hair cloth, and covered with ashes, he prostrated himself upon the ground, and, with the arms of holy prayer, subdued them, and forced them at length to yield. The same venerable author recounts several instances of revelations, visions, and the spirit of prophecy with which the saint was favoured by God. An extraordinary prudence, particularly in the discernment of spirits, was the fruit of his profound humility, perfect purity of heart, spirit of prayer, and contemplation. By this he discovered various subtle illusions and snares of the spirit of darkness. One day, when St. Martin was praying in his cell, the devil came to him environed with light, clothed in royal robes, with a crown of gold and precious stones upon his head, and with a gracious and pleasant countenance, told him twice that he was Christ. Humility is the touchstone which discovers the devil's artifices, in all which a spirit of pride reigns. By this the saint after some pause discerned the evident marks of the angel of darkness, and said to him: "The Lord Jesus said not that he was to come clothed

<sup>1</sup> Sulp. de vita S. Martin, c. 9.

with purple, and crowned and adorned with a diadem. Nor will I ever believe him to be Christ who shall not come in the habit and figure in which Christ suffered, and who shall not bear the marks of the cross in his body." At these words the fiend vanished, and left the cell filled with an intolerable stench.

Whilst St. Martin was employed in making spiritual conquests, and in peaceably propagating the kingdom of Jesus Christ, the western empire was shaken with horrible convulsions. Maximus was proclaimed emperor by the Roman legions in Britain in 383, and, passing into Gaul, was acknowledged by the mutinous soldiery there, made Triers the seat of his empire, and defeated Gratian near Paris, who was betrayed by his own forces, and assassinated by Andragathius at Lyons on the 25th of August, in 383. The churches in Spain and Gaul were at that time disturbed by the Priscillianists,<sup>1</sup> who renewed many errors of

<sup>1</sup> One Mark, a Manichee, coming from Memphis in Egypt into Spain, spread the poison of his errors in Galicia. His first disciple was Agape, a lady of distinction, who brought over a rhetorician named Elpidius. These taught Priscillian, who gave name to the sect. He was rich, and well born; had fine parts; was eloquent, curious, and inquisitive; had read a great deal, and acquired a great stock of profane learning: but was conceited of his own knowledge, vain, and of a hot restless temper. He tainted with his errors several persons of quality, and a great number of the common people, especially women; and his obliging carriage and modest composed gravity gained him much respect. (See Sulpic. Sev. l. 2. Hist. c. 46—51. Prosper and Isidore in Chron.) The errors of this sect are chiefly gathered from St. Leo's Letter to Turibius, (ep. 15. ed. Quesnell. ol. 93.) the first council of Toledo, (Conc. t. 2. p. 228.) the council of Bragia, in 563. (t. 5. p. 36.) St. Austin, &c. The Priscillianists with Sabellius confounded the three persons in the Trinity, in which they introduced many new uncouth terms: they said Christ is the *only-begotten* Son of God, because he was the only son of Mary, but that God had many other sons: they taught that Christ assumed our nature, was born and suffered only in appearance; that every human soul is a



Simon Magus, the Gnostics and the Manichees, to which they added their favourite tenet of dissimulation and lying, it being an avowed principle amongst them, "Swear, forswear thyself; betray

portion of the divine substance; and pre-exists the state to which it is condemned in the body: that the devil or author of evil, was not created by God, but sprang from darkness and the chaos, and is evil by his original nature; marriages they condemned and dissolved, and authorized obscenities, calling their adulteresses and harlots adoptive sisters: they did not reject the Old Testament, but explained it all allegorically; to the books of the New Testament they added false acts of St. Thomas, St. Andrew, and St. John: and two most blasphemous books, the one wrote by Priscillian, called *Memoria Apostolorum*: the other called *Libra* or the Pound, because it consisted of twelve questions, or blasphemies, This book they ascribed to Dictinus. To conceal their doctrine by lies and perjuries when necessary, they held to be a precept, and were ready to abjure Priscillian and their tenets, (S, Aug. ep. 237, n. 3, &c.) Two bishops named Instantius and Salvianus were seduced by Priscillian. Higinos, bishop of Cordova, their neighbour, at first vigorously opposed them, but afterward came over to them. The two bishops, Instantius and Salvianus, and Elpidius and Priscillian, laymen, were condemned with their heresy by the council of Saragossa, subscribed by twelve bishops, held, not in 380, (as Labbe, Hardouin, Pagi, Tillemont, and Fleury imagine from a mistaken inscription,) but in 381, as cardinal d'Aguirre shows. The execution of this sentence was committed to Ithacius, bishop of Ossobona, (formerly an episcopal see in Lusitania, now called Estombar in Algarves,) who was ordered by the council likewise to excommunicate Higinus, bishop of Cordova. Isidore commends exceedingly the eloquence of Ithacius, but Sulpicius Severus reproaches him and his colleague Idacius with gluttony, revenge, haughtiness, and flattery. This Idacius is commonly, called bishop of Merida, by a mistake of the expression of Sulpicius who calls him *Emeritae aetatis*, of an advanced age. Instantius and Salvian grew furious by their condemnation, and ordained Priscillian bishop of Avila. Ithacius and Idacius exasperated the heretics and others by the violence of their proceedings, and procured a rescript from the emperor Gratian, by which the heretics were ordered to be banished, Instantius, Salvian, and Priscillian, resolved to address themselves to pope Damasus; they perverted many in their

not the secret." Maximus found Ithacius, a Spanish bishop, the warmest accuser of the Priscillianists, waiting for him at Triers. Idacius his colleague joined him there. The new empe-

road near Auch in Aquitaine, particularly Euchrocia, wife of Delphidius, a famous poet and orator, and her daughter Procula, who is said to have been with child by Priscillian. Pope Damasus refused to see them; Salvian died at Rome: the other two repaired to Milan, where St. Ambrose treated them as pope Damasus had done. But they gained Macedonius, master of the offices, who, obtained of Gratian an order to the vicar of Spain to restore them to their churches; which was executed. By this it appears that Spain was no longer governed by a proconsul, as it was a little before, but by a vicar of the prefect of the prætorium of Gaul. This was at that time Gregory, to whom Ithacius had repaired, and whom he found favourable to this cause. Under his protection he remained at Triers, not being able to stand the fury of his enemies in Spain. Maximus in the mean time becoming master of that country listened to his complaints, and dispatched an order to the vicar of Spain to send Instantius and Priscillian to be tried in a council at Bourdeaux, There Instantius was condemned; but Priscillian appealed to Maximus, and they were both sent to him at Triers. Sulpicius says the council ought to have condemned Priscillian for contumacy, or, if he had any room for suspecting these prelates, to reserve the sentence to other bishops, and not leave such crimes to the determination of an emperor. (Hist. 1. 2.) But they doubtless were afraid of offending a new tyrant, with whose inclinations they were no way acquainted. Priscillian and his associates being put to death at Triers were honoured by their followers in Spain as martyrs, and their bones conveyed thither and honoured as relics. Maximus was defeated by Theodosius in Italy, and soon after slain at Aquileia in 338 or 339. Ithacius was then brought to a trial, convicted of seditious and irregular behaviour, and sent into banishment in 389 where he died. The Priscillianists in Spain were repressed by the severe laws of Honorius in 407 and 408, and suppressed by the zeal of the holy pope St. Leo, and of St. Turibius bishop of Astorga, in 447, or at least by the invasion of the Moors. See Simonis de Uries, *Dissertatio Critica de Priscillianists, eorumque fati, doctrinis et moribus. Quarto Ultrajecti. Anno 1745.* Also *Historia Priscillianistarum*, a Fr. Girves, Presbytero Jur. Can. Doct. Romæ, an. 1749. Octavo. See also Tillemont and Orsi.

ror received them favourably, and commanded the ringleaders of the heretics to be conducted thither from Spain, and confronted with their two accusers. St. Martin happened to go to Triers to intercede with the tyrant in favour of certain persons who were condemned to death for adhering to their late master, Gratian. Many at the same time came from different parts to pay their court to Maximus with the most fawning adulation. But our saint always maintained his apostolical authority, imitating herein St. Ambrose, who had been there before him upon an embassy from Valentinian II. Gratian's younger brother, who remained in possession of Italy. Though St. Martin was Maximus's subject, which the other was not, he discovered the utmost reluctance to communicate with Maximus; and, when he was invited to dine at the emperor's table, he refused a long while, saying boldly, that he could not eat at the same table with a man who had deprived one emperor of his dominions, and another of his life. Maximus protested that he had not accepted of the empire voluntarily, but that it had been forced upon him by the soldiery; that his incredible success seemed to testify the will of God, and that not one of his enemies had perished, except those who lost their lives in the battle. St. Martin at length was prevailed upon to accept the invitation, which gave the emperor the utmost satisfaction, who ordered a great entertainment to be made, and invited the most considerable persons of his court, and, among others, his uncle and brother, both counts, and the prefect of the prætorium. The priest who accompanied St. Martin was seated in a most honourable place between two counts, and on the same couch; and St. Martin on a low seat near the emperor. In the midst of the entertainment, an officer presented the cup as usual to Maximus, who ordered it to be given to St. Martin, expect-

ing to receive it from his hand; but, when the bishop had drank, he gave it to his priest, as the most worthy person in the company: which action was exceedingly applauded by the emperor and the whole court. The empress, who attended night and day to the bishop's discourses, sat always at his feet upon the ground, and would needs give him an entertainment in her turn, to which she invited the emperor. St. Martin consented with the utmost reluctance, for though he was above seventy years old, he never conversed with women except on necessary spiritual affairs. But he found it unavoidable, as he had several things to petition for; such as the delivery of prisoners, the recalling several that were in banishment, and restoring estates that had been confiscated. The empress herself waited upon him at table in the humble posture of a servant.

Neither St. Ambrose nor St. Martin, would communicate with Ithacius or those bishops who held communion with him, because they sought to put heretics to death. We cannot wonder at the offence these saints took at their prosecuting Priscillian in such a manner, when we consider how much the Church abhorred the shedding of the blood even of criminals, and never suffered any of her clergy to have any share in such causes, St. Martin continually reprov'd Ithacius for his conduct, and pressed him to desist from his accusation. He also besought Maximus not to spill the blood of the guilty; saying, it was sufficient that they had been declared heretics, and excommunicated by the bishops, and that there was no precedent of an ecclesiastical cause being brought before a secular judge. Ithacius, far from hearkening to his advice, presumed to accuse him of this heresy, as he usually did those whose manner of life seemed to him too rigid. But Maximus, out of regard to St. Martin's remon-

strances, caused the trial to be deferred all the while he stayed at Triers, and even promised him that the blood of the persons accused should not be spilt. But after the saint had left Triers, he suffered himself to be prevailed upon, and committed the cause of the Priscillianists to Evodius, whom he had made prefect of the prætorium. This severe judge convicted Priscillian of several crimes by his own confession, as of holding nocturnal assemblies with lewd women, of praying naked, and other such things. Ithacius was the accuser, and was even present when Priscillian was put to the torture.<sup>1</sup> Though after this he withdrew, and did not assist at their condemnation to death. Evodius laid the whole proceeding before Maximus who declared Priscillian and his accomplices worthy of death. Evodius therefore pronounced sentence. Priscillian, his two clerks named Felicissimus and Armenius, Latrocinus a layman, and Euchrocia were beheaded. The bishop Instantius, who had been condemned by the council of Bourdeaux, was banished to the islands of Sylina, or the isles of Scilly, beyond Britain. Soon after Afarinus and Aurelius, two deacons, were condemned to death: Tiberian was sent to the same islands, and his estate confiscated, and others were punished for the same cause.<sup>2</sup> Ithacius and his associate bishops were supported by the emperor, so that several who disapproved their conduct, durst not condemn them. Only one bishop, named Theognostus, publicly declared against them.

The Ithacians prevailed upon the emperor to send tribunes into Spain with a sovereign power to search out heretics, and deprived them of their lives and possessions. No one doubted but many innocent persons would fall undistinguished in this search: for the paleness of a man's

<sup>1</sup> Latinus Pacatus, in Paneg. Theodos. sen. l. i. fol. 202,

<sup>2</sup> Sulpic. Sev. Hist. Sacra, l. 2. c. 51.

countenance or his dress, was enough to bring him into suspicion with those people. The day after they had obtained this order, they heard, when they least expected it, that St. Martin was almost got to Triers; for he was obliged to go there very often about affairs of charity. The Ithacians were greatly alarmed at his coming, and when they found that he abstained from their communion, they told the emperor that, if the obstinacy of Theognostus was supported by Martin's authority, their reputation would be entirely ruined. Maximus therefore represented mildly to the holy man that the heretics had been justly condemned for their crimes by the imperial judges, not by the bishops. But perceiving that St. Martin was not moved, but urged that the bishops had carried on the prosecutions, Maximus fell into a passion, and going away, gave immediate orders that the persons for whom he came to intercede should be put to death. These were count Narses, and the governor Leucadius, who were obnoxious to Maximus for having adhered to Gratian's party. The holy man had still more at heart to prevent the tribunes being sent into Spain, and this not only for the sake of many catholics, but also for the heretics, whose lives he was extremely desirous to save. His not communicating with the Ithacians was only meant by him to prevent the mischiefs which might arise from the scandal of their unjust deportment: but, as they were not excommunicated, it was no violation of any canon to communicate with them. St. Martin therefore in this extremity ran to the palace again, and promised the emperor to communicate with Ithacius, provided he would pardon those unfortunate persons, and recall the tribunes which had been sent into Spain: Maximus immediately complied with his demands. The next day being pitched upon by the Ithacians for the



ordination of Felix, the newly elected bishop of Triers, St. Martin communicated with them upon that occasion, that so many people might be rescued from slaughter. The day following, he left Triers with some remorse, or a grief for his condescension. But he was comforted by an angel at prayer in the wood near Andethanna, now Echternach, five miles from Triers, who said to him, that he had reason to grieve for a condescension which was a misery, but charity rendered it necessary and excusable.<sup>1</sup> St Sulpicius adds, that St. Martin used to tell them with tears in his eyes, that, from this time, it cost him more difficulty and longer prayers to cast out devils than formerly. Some weakness, imperfection, or venial sin is often an occasion of a subtraction of sensible devotion or grace, till it be recovered by greater humility and compunction; though such subtractions are frequently sent merely for trials.

St. Martin continued his journey to Tours where he was received as the tutelar angel of his people. In his great age he relaxed nothing of his zealous labours for the salvation of others; and he continued to the end of his life to confirm his doctrine by frequent and wonderful miracles, as we are assured by St. Sulpicius Severus. This great man<sup>2</sup> renouncing the world, chose for his first retreat a little cottage upon an estate which he had at a village upon the borders of Aquitain, now in Languedoc, called Primuliac, and afterward Mount Primlau, a place not now known. He made several visits to St. Martin, and squared his life by his direction. Upon his arrival, the blessed man himself presented water to him and his companions to wash their hands before eating, ordered them to be served with a moderate corporal refectio : then fed them with the spiritual

<sup>1</sup> Sulpic. Sev. Dial. 3. c. 11., 12, 13.

<sup>2</sup> See the Life of St. Sulpicius, 29 Jan, vol. i. p. 166.

food of his heavenly discourses, strongly exhorting them to renounce sensuality, and the pleasures and distraction of the world, that without hinderance, they might follow the Lord Jesus with their whole hearts. In the evening he washed their feet with his own hands. St Sulpicius assures us, that though a stranger to secular learning, he was in his discourses clear, methodical, pathetically vehement, and powerfully eloquent: that he was very ready in solving intricate difficulties of holy writ, in answering questions upon spiritual matters, and in giving to every one suitable advice: that no one confuted errors and infidelity, or set off the truth of the Christian religion with greater perspicuity or force. This illustrious author adds, that he never heard any man speak with so much good sense, with so much knowledge and penetration, or with purer language: and that the gravity dignity, and humility, with which he delivered himself, were not to be expressed. Nevertheless, his strongest exhortation to perfect virtue, was the almost irresistible influence of his example and wonderful sanctity. No one ever saw him angry, disturbed, sad, or vainly laughing: the same tranquillity of mind, the same serenity of countenance appeared in him in prosperity and adversity, and, under all the vicissitudes of human accidents, even beyond what seemed possible in this mortal life. Christ was always in his mouth, and in his heart. Nothing reigned there but that sincere humility, piety, peace, mercy, and goodness. He was very cautious never to judge others, and to interpret every one's actions, if it were possible, in the best part. Injuries, slanders, envy, and the jealousy of persecutors, which, in the whole course of his life were never wanting, he recompensed by weeping bitterly for their sins, and by seeking every opportunity of serving them, and of heaping

benefits upon them, never excluding any one from his holy friendship.<sup>1</sup> He would never lose any time in the day, and often passed whole nights in labours and watchings. To his body he allowed only that refreshment and repose which extreme necessity required, lying on the bare ground, covered with a coarse sackcloth. Amidst his exterior employments his heart was always closely united to God, and he seemed never to lose sight of his presence, either in words or actions. And as smiths when they have no iron bar before them to work on, strike sometimes on the anvil through use; so St. Martin, whether he read, or wrote, or treated with men, through habit was continually recollected in the interior man, and conversed sweetly with the heavenly Spouse, and with the giver of all graces. He was accustomed to gather profitable spiritual lessons and thoughts, and to kindle holy affections from all things which occurred. Once when he saw a sheep newly shorn, he pleasantly said to those that were with him: "This sheep hath fulfilled the precept of the gospel, because having enough for two coats, it hath parted with one to such as have need: so should you likewise do." Seeing a man keeping swine, very cold, and but half covered with a poor scanty coat of skins, he said; "Behold Adam driven out of Paradise; but let us, leaving the old Adam, clothe ourselves with the new." In visiting his diocess, arriving once at a river, he saw a great quantity of fowl very busy in gorging up the fish; whereupon he said; "These ravenous birds resemble much our infernal enemies, which lie always in wait to catch unwary souls, and suddenly make them their prey:" But he commanded the fowls to leave the waters, and betake themselves to the hills and moors; which they instantly did. In this man-

<sup>1</sup> Sulpic. vit. S. Martin, c. 26, 27.

ner every creature served the saint's purified eyes as a lively glass of truth; and, from all things, he gathered, without study or labour, and even with delight, wholesome lessons, to maintain his heart always in pure and heavenly thoughts. In like manner he endeavoured that his subjects should exercise their souls constantly in prayer, that they might be disposed to afford a clean and agreeable lodging to the heavenly Spouse. It was by keeping his mind ever fixed on God, and by the excellent purity of his heart, much more than by the natural vivacity of his wit, and by his reading, that he attained to so high a degree of true science, and heavenly eloquence, and acquired that strength with which, as a great captain of the spiritual warfare, he by all means continually waged war against the prince of this world, and, wherever he went, dispossessed him of his ancient tyranny.

St. Martin was above fourscore years old, when God was pleased to put a happy end to his labours. Long before his departure he had a knowledge of his approaching death, which he clearly foretold to his disciples. Being informed that a scandalous difference had arose amongst the clergy at Cande, a parish at the extremity of his diocess, at the confluence of the Loire and the Vienne in Touraine, upon the borders of Poitou and Anjou, he went thither to compose the disturbance, attended as usual by a great number of his disciples. Having remained there some time, and settled all things to his satisfaction, he was preparing for his return, when he was seized with his last sickness, and found, on a sudden, his strength fail him. As soon as he was taken ill, he called his religious brethren about him and told them that the time of his departure was come. At this news they all with tears and with one voice said to him: "Father why do you forsake us? or to whom do you recommend us?"

The ravening wolves will fall upon your flock. We know you desire to be with Jesus Christ; but your reward is secure; nor will be a whit diminished by being deferred a while. Have pity on our necessity, who are left amidst great dangers." The servant of God, moved with their tears, wept also, and prayed thus: "Lord, if I am still necessary to thy people, I refuse no labour. Thy holy will be done." As if he had said, says St. Sulpicius; My soul is unconquered by old age, weakness, or fatigues, and ready to sustain new conflicts, if you call me to them. But if you spare my age, and take me to yourself, be the guardian and protector of those souls for which I fear. By these words he showed that he knew not which was dearest to him, either to remain on earth for Christ, or to leave the earth for Christ; and has taught us in prayer for temporal things, to remit ourselves with perfect resignation and indifference to the divine will, begging that God may direct all things in us and through us to his greater glory. The saint had a fever which lasted some days: notwithstanding which he spent the night in prayer, lying on ashes and hair cloth. His disciples earnestly intreated him that he would suffer them at least to put a little straw under him. But he replied: "It becomes not a Christian to die otherwise than upon ashes. I shall have sinned if I leave you any other example." He continually held up his eyes and hands to heaven, never interrupting his prayer, so that the priests that stood about him, begged he would turn himself on one side, to afford his body a little rest. He answered: "Allow me, my brethren, to look rather towards heaven than upon the earth, that my soul may be directed to take its flight to the Lord to whom it is going." Afterward, seeing the devil near him, he said: "What dost thou here, cruel beast? Thou shalt find nothing in me. Abraham's bosom is open to

receive me. Saying these words, he expired on the 8th of November, probably in 397.<sup>1</sup> He died seven months after St. Ambrose, as St. Gregory of Tours assures us. They who were present wondered at the brightness of his face and whole body, which seemed to them as if it were already glorified.<sup>2</sup> The inhabitants of Poitiers warmly disputed the possession of his body; but the people of Tours carried it off. The whole city came out to meet it: all the country people and many from neighbouring cities flocked thither, with about two thousand monks, and a great company of virgins. They all melted into tears, though no one doubted of his glory. He was carried with hymns to the place of his interment, which was in a little grove at some distance from the monastery, where certain monks lived in separate cells. The place was then five hundred and thirty paces from the city, as St. Gregory of Tours informs us, though at present it is part of it, and the walls were carried so far as to encompass it in the beginning of the inroads of the Normans. St. Brice, St. Martin's successor, built a chapel over his tomb, and St. Perpetuus, the sixth bishop of Tours, about the year 470, founded upon that spot the great church and monastery, the saint's sumptuous tomb being placed behind the high altar.<sup>3</sup> These monks secularized themselves in the seventh century. Toward the close of the eighth, pope Adrian I. at the request of Charlemagne, placed there regular canons, and Alcuin was shortly after appointed their abbot.<sup>4</sup> These canons were secularized in

<sup>1</sup> On the Chronology of the Life of St. Martin, which is very intricate, see *Mem. de Trevoux*, an. 1765, p. 1258. 1269.

<sup>2</sup> S. Sulpic. Sever. ep. 3. ad Bassulam Socrum suam, p. 369.

<sup>3</sup> That this was an abbey of monks till the seventh century is invincibly demonstrated by Dom. Badier against Abbé Gervaise.

<sup>4</sup> Hence the authors of the History of the Gallican Church, and some others, doubt whether Alcuin was a monk. But it seems undoubted that he had professed himself a monk in his youth in England. And F. Daniel observes from Eginhard, that Charlemagne never nominated



the reign of Charles the Bald, in 849, and have continued so ever since. The king of France, from the time of Hugh Capet, is the abbot and first canon: besides eleven dignitaries, and fifty-one canons, &c. here are ecclesiastical honorary canons, namely, the patriarch of Jerusalem, the archbishops of Mentz, Cologne, Compostella, Sens, and Bourges; the bishops of Liege, Strasbourg, Angers, Auxerre, and Quebec; and the abbots of Marmoutier, and St. Julian's at Tours; and lay honorary canons, the dauphin, the dukes of Burgundy, Anjou, Brittany, Bourbon, Vendome, and Nevers: the counts of Flanders, Dunois and Angouleme: also the earl of Douglas, in Scotland, before that family had changed its religion. The extraordinary devotion which the French and all Europe have expressed to St. Martin, and to this church for the sake of his precious tomb, would furnish matter for a large history. The Huguenots rifled the shrine and scattered the relics of this saint. But this church recovered a bone of his arm, and part of his skull.<sup>1</sup> Before this dispersion, certain churches had obtained small portions which they still preserve. The priory of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields at Paris is possessed of a part: two of his teeth are shown in St. Martin's at Tournay. The cathedral at Tours was built by St. Martin in honour of St. Maurice: but since the year 1096, bears the title of St. Gatian's. Its chapter is one of the most illustrious in France; the bishop of Tours was suffragan to Rouen till he was made a metropolitan. A vial of sacred oil is kept at St. Martin's, with which Henry IV. was anointed

the same person to two abbeys, except Alcuin, to whom he gave several abbeys, that he might settle in them regular discipline; which he might do, though of a different Order. He, indeed, chose St. Martin's at Tours for his retreat; but his view was to settle better the discipline of this great house, and to satisfy his devotion to St. Martin, in imitation of many other great men. There also he had the convenience of an excellent library.

<sup>1</sup> See Gervaise, l. 4. p. 344. 352.

king instead of that from Rheims. St. Sulpicius relates that St. Martin sometimes cured distempers by oil which he had blessed,<sup>1</sup> and that this oil was sometimes miraculously increased.<sup>2</sup>

Many miracles wrought at the shrine of St. Martin, or through his intercession, immediately after his happy death, some of which are recounted by St. Gregory of Tours, Fortunatus, and others, excited exceedingly the devotion of the people. Some have imagined that he was the first saint publicly honoured by the Church as a confessor; but this is not so much as insinuated by any ancient author: and St. John the Evangelist, St. Thecla, and many others were not properly martyrs, not to mention St. Petronilla, St. Praxedes, and St. Pudentiana. The principal feast of Saint Martin is kept on the 11th of November: that of his ordination and the translation of his relics on the 4th of July: that of bringing them back from Auxerre to Tours, called *Relatio*, on the 13th of December.

The virtue of St. Martin, which was the miracle of the world, was founded in the most profound humility, perfect meekness, and self-denial by which he was dead to himself, in his continual meditation on religious truths, in his love of heavenly things, and contempt of the world, to which his heart was crucified: lastly, in the constant union of his soul to God by the exercise

<sup>1</sup> Oil found in the tombs of saints, or even that which was taken from lamps which burned before their shrines, has been anciently often used with devotion as a relic; but this ought not lightly to be done by private persons. St. Gregory the Great sent to queen Theodelinda the oils, as he calls them, of SS. Peter, Paul, and of near seventy other martyrs and confessors at Rome; and some portions called the oil of many hundreds, and others of many thousands. See Muratori, *Anecd. Lat.* t. 2. Mabillon, *Diss. des SS. Inconnus*, c. 19. p. 103. and App. p. 174.) Paul Warnefrid (*De Gest. Longob.* l. 2. c. 15.) attributes a miraculous healing of sore eyes to the application of oil taken from a lamp burning before St. Martin's altar.

<sup>2</sup> S. Sulp. Dial. 3. c. 2, 3.

of holy prayer, and by the entire resignation of himself to the divine will in all things without reserve. Such a disposition could not but be accompanied with the most ardent fraternal charity, zeal for the divine honour, and all other virtues. Whatever our state and circumstances may be in the world, unless by learning the same virtues, and studying daily to improve them in our hearts, we put on the spirit of Christ, bear his image in our souls, and wear his livery, we cannot hope to be owned by him at the last day, or to find admittance into the company of his elect; but shall be cast forth with the reprobate into outer darkness.

### ST. MENNAS, M.

THE edicts of Dioclesian were rigorously executed in the East, when Mennas or Menas, an Egyptian by birth, a soldier in the Roman troops, then quartered at Cotyæus in Phrygia, was apprehended, and, boldly confessing his faith, cruelly scourged, then tormented in the most inhuman manner on the rack, and at length beheaded, by the command of Pyrrhus, the president, probably about the year 304. His name has been always very famous in the calendars of the Church, especially in the East. See the first acts of this martyr, translated in Surius, who borrowed them from Metaphrastes.

Another St. MENNAS, martyr in Lybia, under Maximian, is named in the Eastern and Western Martyrologies on the 10th of December. Procopius (l. 1. de ædif. Justin.) mentions a church built at Constantinople by Justinian, in honour of St. Mennas, whose body was translated thither. This Baronius understands of the Lybian; Jos. Assemani of Mennas, the soldier under Dioclesian. (t. 5. p. 461.)