

ST. ALICE, OR ADELAIDE, V. ABBESS.

SHE was daughter of Megendose, count of Guelders, and governed the nunnery of Bellich on the Rhine, near Bonn, (now a church of canonesses,) but died in 1015, abbess of our Lady's in Cologne, both monasteries having been founded by her father. Her festival, with an octave, is kept at Bellich, or Vilich, where the nunnery which she instituted, of the order of St. Bennet, is now converted into a church of canonesses. See her life in Surius and Bollandus; also Miræus, in *Fastis Belgicis*, &c.

ST. ABRAAMIUS,

BISHOP OF ARBELA, M.

THIS city, after the fall of Ninive, was long the capital of Adiabene, in Assyria, and was one bishopric with Hazza, anciently called Adiab. Arbela, now called Irbil, was famous for the victory of Alexander; but received far greater lustre from the martyrdom of St. Abraamius, its bishop, who sealed his faith with his blood, after having suffered horrible torments, which were inflicted by order of an arch magian, in the fifth year of King Sapor's persecution, that is, of Christ 348. See Sozomen, . 2. c. 12. and the Greek *Menæa* and *Synaxary*.

FEBRUARY VI.

ST. DOROTHY, VIRGIN AND MARTYR.

See St. Aldhelm, Ado, Usuard, &c. in Bollandus, p. 771.

ST. ALDHELM relates from her acts, (1) that Fabricius, the governor of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, inflicted on her most cruel torments, because she refused to marry, or to adore idols: that she converted two apostate women sent to seduce her: and that being condemned to be beheaded, she converted one Theophilus, by sending him certain fruits and flowers miraculously obtained

(1) L. de Laud. Virgin. c. 25.

in 8vo. 1643. See them in Sirmond's works, t. 2. and *Bibl. Patr.* His close manner of confuting the Arians in some of his letters, makes us regret the loss of many other works, which he wrote against them.

of her heavenly spouse. She seems to have suffered under Dioclesian. Her body is kept in the celebrated church which bears her name, beyond the Tiber, in Rome. She is mentioned on this day in the ancient Martyrology under the name of St. Jerom. There was another holy virgin, whom Rufin calls Dorothy, a rich and noble lady of the city of Alexandria, who suffered torments and a voluntary banishment, to preserve her faith and chastity against the brutish lust and tyranny of the emperor Maximinus, in the year 308, as is recorded by Eusebius(1) and Rufinus:(2) but many take this latter, whose name is not mentioned by Eusebius, to be the famous St. Catharine of Alexandria.

The blood of the martyrs flourished in its hundred-fold increase, as St. Justin has well observed: "We are slain with the sword, but we increase and multiply: the more we are persecuted and destroyed, the more are added to our numbers. As a vine, by being pruned and cut close, shoots forth new suckers, and bears a greater abundance of fruit; so is it with us."(3) Among other false reflections, the baron of Montesquieu, an author too much admired by many, writes:(4) "It is hardly possible that Christianity should ever be established in China. Vows of virginity, the assembling of women in the churches, their necessary intercourse with the ministers of religion, their participation of the sacraments, auricular confession, the marrying but one wife; all this oversets the manners and customs, and strikes at the religion and laws of the country." Could he forget that the gospel overcame all these impediments where it was first established, in spite of the most inveterate prejudices, and of all worldly opposition from the great and the learned; whereas philosophy, though patronized by princes, could never in any age introduce its rules even into one city. In vain did the philosopher Plotinus solicit the emperor Gallienus to rebuild a ruined city in Campania, that he and his disciples might establish in it the republic of Plato: a system, in some points, flattering the passions of men, almost as Mahometism fell in with the prejudices and passions of the nations where it prevails. So visibly is the church the work of God.

(1) L. 8. c. 14.

(3) Apol. 2. ol. 1

(2) L. 1. c. 17.

(4) L'Esprit des Loix, b. xix. 18.