

after translated to the monastery of Herfeld, and his shrine there adorned by St. Lullus with gold and silver. He is named on the 13th of August in the Martyrology of Rabanus Maurus; in that of Usuard, and in the Roman. See his life written by Lupus, then a priest under Rabanus Maurus at Mentz, afterwards abbot of Ferrieres, three leagues from Montargis, in Gatinois, in the diocess of Sens, published by Baluze, inter op. Servati Lupi Ferrar. p. 292. Mabillon, act. Ben. sæc. 3, p. 671, and Solier the Bollandist, ad 13 Aug. p. 132.

AUGUST XIV.

ST. EUSEBIUS, PRIEST, M.

From his genuine Acts, published by Dom. Martenne, Thesaur. Anecdotarum, t. 3, p. 1649.

ABOUT THE END OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

In the reign of Dioclesian and Maximian, before they had published any new edicts against the Christians, Eusebius, a holy priest, a man eminently endowed with the spirit of prayer, and all apostolical virtues, suffered death for the faith, probably in Palestine. The emperor Maximian happening to be in that country, an information was lodged with Maxentius, president of the province, against Eusebius, that he distinguished himself by his zeal in invoking and preaching Christ, and the holy man was apprehended, and brought before him. Maxentius, whom the people stirred up by furious clamours against the servant of Christ, said to him: "Sacrifice to the gods freely, or you shall be made to do it against your will." The martyr replied: "There is a greater law which says, *Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God, and him alone shalt thou serve.*" Maxentius urged: "Choose either to offer sacrifice, or to suffer the most rigorous torments." Eusebius answered: "It is not consistent with reason for a person to adore stones, than which nothing is viler or more brittle." MAXENTIUS: "These Christians are a hardened race of men, to whom it seems desirable rather to die than to live." EUSEBIUS: "It is impious to despise the light for the sake of darkness." MAXENTIUS: "You grow more ob-

stinate by lenity and entreaties. I therefore lay them aside, and frankly tell you, that, unless you sacrifice, you shall be burnt alive." EUSEBIUS: "As to that I am in no pain. The more severe or cruel the torments are, the greater will the crown be." Upon this, Maxentius ordered that he should be stretched on the rack, and his sides rent with iron hooks. Eusebius repeated whilst he was tormenting: "Lord Jesus preserve me. Whether we live or die, we are yours." The president was amazed at his constancy and fortitude, and after some time, commanded that he should be taken off the rack. Then he said to him: "Do you know the decree of the senate, which commands all to sacrifice to the gods?" These words show that the saint was indicted upon former laws, and that this happened before the general edicts of Dioclesian. Eusebius answered: "The command of God is to take place before that of man." The judge, flushed with rage, commanded that he should be led to the fire as if it were to be burnt alive.

Eusebius walked out with a constancy and joy painted in his countenance which struck the prefect and the by-standers with amazement, and the prefect called after him: "You run to an unnecessary death; your obstinacy astonishes me. Change your mind." The martyr said: "If the emperor commands me to adore dumb metal in contempt of the true God, let me appear before him." This he said because he was impeached upon old laws, the present emperors not having yet made any new ones against the Christians. Maxentius therefore said to his guards and keepers: "Let him be confined till tomorrow;" and forthwith going in to the prince, he said: "Great emperor, I have found a seditious man who is disobedient to the laws, and even denies to my face that the gods have any power, and refuses to sacrifice, or to adore your name." The emperor answered: "Let him be brought before me." A person present, who had seen him at the prefect's tribunal, said: "If you see him, you will be moved by his speech." The emperor replied: Is he such a man that he can even change me?" The prefect then spoke: "He will change not only you, but the minds of all the people. If you once behold his looks, you will feel yourself strangely moved to follow his inclinations."* The

* Si ejus aspexeris vultum, securâ et votum. Acta.

emperor, however, ordered that he should be brought in. As he entered, every one was struck in beholding the dazzling brightness which appeared in his countenance, the joy and the affecting composure, sweetness and undaunted courage which shone in his looks and eye, and the gracefulness of his air, and whole mien, which in his venerable old age seemed to breathe an air of virtue above what is human. The emperor fixed his eyes steadfastly upon him, as if he beheld in him something divine, and spoke thus: "Old man, why are you come before me? speak, and be not afraid." Seeing him still silent, he said: "Speak freely; answer my questions. I desire that you be saved." Eusebius answered: "If I hope to be saved by man, I can no longer expect salvation from God. If you excel in dignity and power, we are, nevertheless, all mortal alike. Neither will I be afraid to repeat before you what I have already declared. I am a Christian; nor can I adore wood and stones; but I most readily obey the true God whom I know, and whose goodness I have experienced." The emperor said to the president, "What harm is it if this man adores the God of whom he speaks, as above all others." Maxentius made answer: "Be not deceived, most invincible emperor; he does not call what you imagine God, but I know not what Jesus, whom our nation or ancestors never knew." The emperor said: "Go you forth, and judge him according to justice and the laws. I will not be judge in such an affair."

This Maximian was by birth a barbarian, one of the roughest, most brutish and savage of all men. Yet the undaunted and modest virtue of this stranger set off by a heavenly grace, struck him with awe. He desired to save the servant of Christ, but, like Pilate, would not give himself any trouble, or hazard incurring the displeasure of those whom on all other occasions he despised. So unaccountably cowardly are worldly and wicked men in the practice of virtue, who in vice are unbridled and daring. Maxentius going out ascended his tribunal, and sternly commanded Eusebius to sacrifice to the gods. He answered: "I will never sacrifice to those who can neither see nor hear." Maxentius said: "Sacrifice, or torments and flames must be your portion. He whom you fear is not able to deliver you from them." Eusebius replied: "Neither

fire nor the sword will work any change in me. Tear this weak body to pieces with the utmost cruelty ; treat it in what manner you please. My soul, which is God's, cannot be hurt by your torments. I persevere firm in the holy law to which I have adhered from my cradle." The president, upon this, condemned him to be beheaded. Eusebius, hearing the sentence pronounced, said aloud : " I thank your goodness, and praise your power, O Lord Jesus Christ, that by calling me to the trial of my fidelity, you have treated me as one of yours." He, at that instant, heard a voice from heaven saying to him : " If you had not been found worthy to suffer, you could not be admitted into the court of Christ, or to the seats of the just." Being come to the place of execution, he knelt down, and his head was struck off. His soul flew to Christ ; but Maxentius, afflicted with numberless pains, would not please Christ, and never was able to please the world, which he so much dreaded and courted. This is the martyr Eusebius, who is mentioned on this day in some ancient Martyrologies which bear the name of St. Jerom, and others, which place his death in Palestine.

The martyrs, by their meek constancy, vanquished the fiercest tyrants, and haughty lords of the world ; they struck with a secret awe those who tormented them, whose obstinacy, malice, and love of the world, still shut their heart to the truth

ST. EUSEBIUS, PRIEST AND CONFESSOR AT ROME,

Is named with distinction in the Latin Martyrologies on this day. The ancient genuine Martyrology of Usuard only styles him confessor under the Arian emperor Constantius, and adds, that he was buried in the cemetery of Calixtus. His acts seem of no authority. They are published by Mombrinius, and more correctly by Baluze, t. 2. Miscel. p. 141. These relate that, for opposing Pope Liberius for signing the confession of Sirmium, he was persecuted by the emperor, and imprisoned some months in his room, under which confinement he sanctified himself by continual prayer, and happily died. He is called a martyr in several modern Martyrologies.