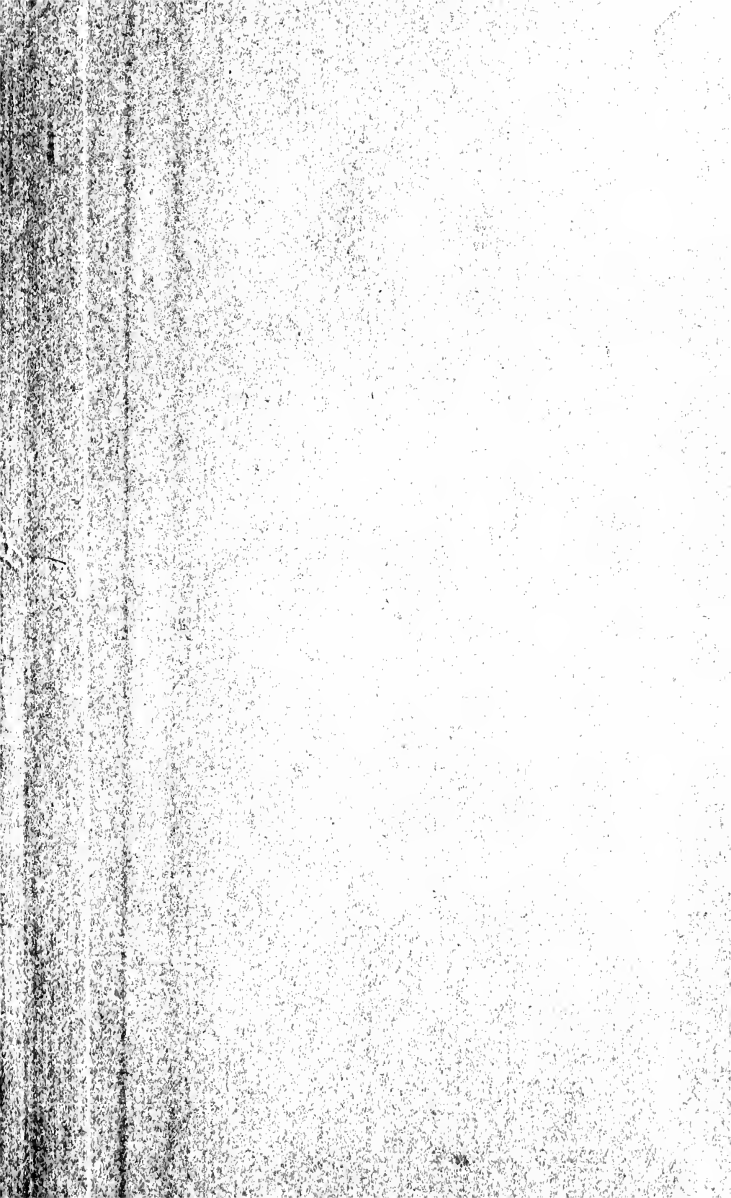


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L I V E S
OF THE MOST EMINENT
FATHERS OF THE CHURCH
THAT FLOURISHED IN THE
FIRST FOUR CENTURIES;

WITH
AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE STATE OF PAGANISM UNDER
THE FIRST CHRISTIAN EMPERORS.

BY
WILLIAM CAVE, D. D.

A NEW EDITION, CAREFULLY REVISED,

BY
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WORCESTER COLLEGE, AND PERPETUAL CURATE OF ST. PAUL'S, OXFORD.

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P R E F A C E.

Two things there are, whereof, it is like, the reader will expect some account in reference to the following papers; first, concerning the work itself; and next, the materials out of which it is framed and built.

The work contains the noblest portion of church history, this being, in many respects, the most considerable age of the church. For besides what concerns particular persons, whose lives and actions are here related, he will here find an account of the fall and suppression of paganism, the ancient and universally received religion of the world; of the conversion of princes to the faith; the adopting Christianity to be the religion of the empire; the acts and proceedings of the two first general councils; the advancement of the church to its greatest height of splendour; and those lamentable ruptures that soon after were made in it by schism and faction, by covetousness and ambition, and “the cunning craftiness of those that lie in wait to deceive.”

It had pleased the Divine Wisdom and Providence, now at length to rescue Christianity from the cruelties of those heathen persecutions which for some ages had quartered so heavily upon it, and to raise up a prince to be “a nursing father to the

church," whose piety made him as willing, as his power made him able, to protect and defend it. He guarded it with wise and prudent laws, enriched it with an immense bounty and munificence, honoured and revered its bishops, encouraged and nobly provided for its clergy; demolished churches were repaired, and new ones were erected with all the pomp and magnificence which cost or art could bestow upon them; the solemn assemblies were mightily frequented, and increased by the daily accession of new converts; the holy offices were performed with all due reverence and devotion, and days of jubilee were kept in every place, in thankfulness to heaven for so happy a change and revolution of affairs, so blessed a scene of prosperity and safety. It added to the joys of the common triumph, to see pagan idolatry and superstition going so fast down the wind, and every where driven into holes and corners. All this the devil, the great adversary of mankind, beheld with an envious and an evil eye; and because no longer able to assault the church by force and violence, he resolved to attack it by more secret and destructive councils. Hereupon the envious man betook himself to his old trade of sowing tares, stirring up fit agents and emissaries to poison men's minds with error, intending thereby to break the church into parties and factions, and to introduce irreconcilable feuds and quarrels, which produced fatal and mischievous effects, beyond the rage of all the heathen persecutions. Nor did these agents make their onset upon the outworks of the faith, but set themselves to undermine the main and foundation articles of Christianity; and whereas hitherto the Gentiles had exalted creatures into the place of God, these factors endeavoured to dethrone God into the rank of creatures.

The first that entered on the public stage, to set on foot this design, was Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, who, being a man of nimble parts and a daring spirit, openly called in question the catholic doctrine concerning the divinity, eternity, and coessentiality of the Son of God, and in opposition thereunto advanced quite contrary propositions of his own; which, notwithstanding his shuffling compliances at every turn to serve his cause, he stiffly maintained while he lived, and his disciples and followers improved and carried on after his decease: the growth and progress of whose pernicious heresy we have, with some care and diligence, traced from its very first originals, remarked the several steps and advances which it made, and the evil arts which that subtle and potent faction made use of to promote and further it. The account whereof we have chiefly lodged in the Life of Athanasius, (the proper seat of the Arian story,) where if any passages seem but hinted at, or briefly related, they will be found more at large in some of the other Lives, where they more properly fall in. And because from this root of bitterness many poisonous branches sprang up, we have taken notice, as they came in our way, of the several subordinate sects and heresies that infested the church within this period.

But though all along we have kept an eye to the general story, yet we have still remembered what we had more particularly in design, the lives of the learned and excellent persons of this age, whose story we have drawn together, as far as the records of those times would enable us, with useful reflections upon those divine graces and virtues, which rendered them so exemplary and conspicuous in their several stations: nor have

we forgotten, what conduces not a little to clear the learned part of their story, to observe the particular times and occasions upon which many of those books which they have left behind them were written. If we have not made so particular a crisis and censure of every single tract, as some men perhaps may expect, it was because the thing has been done so often, and to far better purposes, by others, than I can pretend to do it. And I had no mind to write church histories out of Binius, or to present the world with a view of antiquity, by transcribing what Scultetus, Cook, Rivet, &c., what Possevine, Bellarmin, Labbé, &c., have said upon those arguments. However, I hope enough is here said to clear the most material cases, and that their works are set in such a light, as will let the world see how unjust and unscholar-like that censure is, which a “hater of false history” has passed upon the primitive fathers,^a and ushered in with an, “It is past all doubt, that the number of learned bishops among them was very rare; and that there are many poor men among us, divers weavers and ploughmen of his own church at Kidderminster, who are able, not only to pray and teach, as well as most of those, who are by Eusebius extolled as the famous bishops of the second and third age, but to write as methodical, pious, weighty tractates, as any that were written by men that neither conversed with the apostles, nor had been bred up in philosophy; no, not excepting Clemens Romanus himself, Ignatius, Irenæus, Cyprian, Macarius, Ephraem Syrus, Synesius, Isidore Pelusiota, and many more; and that he could name many laymen not only learned, but such as have neither had many languages nor philosophy, who have written

^a Bs. Abridg. of Ch. Hist. ch. 5. sect. 17. p. 92. Treat. of Episc. p. 1. ch. 14. p. 169.

more accurately and judiciously, and as piously as any of these.”

If it shall seem strange to any, that so learned and busy an age of the church should afford materials but for nine lives, (for no more were at first drawn up,) that wonder will cease when it is considered, that the story of these persons is very large and comprehensive, and gathers in the account of most others of note, which of themselves were not enough to fill up distinct single lives. However, these papers lying a long time by me, gave me an opportunity to look back upon the story of this age, and to gather up the scattered and imperfect memoirs that were left behind; which accordingly I picked up, and put together, and have thrown into an appendix at the end of the book. I might indeed have taken the advantage of the lives of St. Augustine, Jerome, and some others; but their story runs too far out into the following *sæculum*, to be properly brought within the compass of this. Besides that, I was sensible that the volume was already swelled into too great a bulk, and indeed much greater than I either desired or intended. And because I had elsewhere observed the methods by which Christianity had prevailed in the world during the times of the heathen emperors, I now thought good to premise an historical survey of the state of Paganism, under the reign of the first Christian emperors; though not with that latitude which the subject may seem capable of; remembering I wrote not an History but an Introduction. I know not whether the reader may expect to find more particular accounts of some things relating to the reign of Julian, (of late so hotly contested among us.) But besides my natural averseness to controversy, this Introduction was not

only written, but printed some months before ever the dispute was started concerning Julian, which has made so much noise amongst us. If the reader shall meet with any passages in the body of the book which may more properly seem to challenge a place in the Introduction, he may please to take notice, that this last was a piece of a later date, done after the other was completed. A good part of the accounts relating to this affair, I have borrowed from the imperial laws of those times; for adjusting the dates, and ascertaining the true meaning of many of which, I own myself obliged to the learned Monsieur Gothofred, in his elaborate commentaries on the Theodosian code. The same author has a small tract under this title, *De Statu Paganorum*, &c. but which, upon view, as these papers were going to the press, I found to be nothing but short notes, which he afterwards published more at large in his comment on the Tenth Title of the last book of the forementioned code, viz. the title, *De Paganis, Sacrificiis, et Templis*. And pity it is that that title is so defective, the laws of five several emperors, relating to these matters, viz. Julian, Jovian, Valentinian, Valens, and Gratian, for the space of no less than five and twenty years, (the full fourth part of the *sæculum*;) being utterly lost.

Such is the work we have here built up. Come we next to the authors that furnished out materials for it. And herein I have constantly observed this method. In the first place, I always had recourse to the works of that person whose life I designed to write, as which were likeliest to afford the most certain and satisfactory account of things. And herein none served me to better purpose than the writings of Athanasius, who is most punctual and accurate in setting down all the im-

portant affairs and passages of his own life, and, indeed, in recording the general story of those times. And it could not but seem strange to me, as I suppose it will do to others, that the church historians, Socrates, &c. who trade so much in his writings, have yet so wofully perplexed and entangled his affairs, even in those things which in Athanasius himself are very plain and easy. And here, by the way, I cannot but bewail the unhappy fate of this great man's writings, (and, indeed, of most of the Greek fathers,) that they are generally so ill translated, as must very often unavoidably mislead those that are forced to depend upon them. Of the truth whereof, were there no other, Baronius is a notorious instance. Next, I betook myself to those who lived at the same time with them, or at no great distance from them, and from them picked up such historical remarks as might be most useful to my purpose; especially such who had written the Lives of any of the ancients that lived not long before them. Last of all, I applied myself to the ecclesiastical historians; the chief whereof (setting aside Eusebius, of whom elsewhere, and a small part of whose history relates to this period) are four, all writing much about the same time, viz. Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Philostorgius.

Socrates was born at Constantinople, probably about the beginning of the reign of Theodosius, educated under two famous masters, Helladius and Ammonius, who, having fled from Alexandria, had opened a grammar-school in the imperial city. Being grown up, he turned advocate, (thence turned *scholasticus*,) and pleaded causes. In his declining age, he set himself to write the history of the church, which he despatched in seven books, beginning where Eusebius left, and ending anno 439: a

work designedly written in a plain style, but with singular industry and fidelity, and which he reviewed and corrected more than once: nor did he trade in flying reports, the accounts he gives being either of such things as himself had seen, or had received from credible eye-witnesses, or transcribed from records of unquestionable authority. As to his religion, he was a Catholic, for though some passages in his history look favourably upon the Novatians, yet they are not sufficient to evince him to have been of that side.

Sozomen was descended of ancestors that were of Palestine extraction: he studied the law at Berytus, the university of the Roman laws; and thence betook himself to the practic part of them, viz. to plead causes at Constantinople. During this employment, he set upon writing an ecclesiastical history, which he began from the birth of Christ, and brought down to the deposing of Licinius. But this, it is like, was nothing but a compendium of Eusebius's history, and is long since lost. Hence he carried it on through the reigns of the several emperors, till the times of the younger Theodosius, to whom he dedicated it. His style is even, and very agreeable to his subject, wherein he goes as far beyond Socrates, as he falls short of him in judgment and accuracy. They both lived at the same time, and it admits of some debate, which of them wrote first; but there are some circumstances that adjudge the precedency to Socrates, and this not the least, that Sozomen frequently adds to, and enlarges the other's relations and accounts of things.

The next that succeeds is Theodoret, born at or near Antioch in Syria, devoted by his parents to a very strict and devout life;

and accordingly brought up under great severity of discipline, especially under the care and tutorage of Theodorus, bishop of Mopsuestia; preferred afterwards to the bishopric of Cyrus, a city built by the Jews in honour of Cyrus, the great Persian prince: a man of excellent learning and admirable parts; among the many monuments whereof, which he has transmitted to posterity, his ecclesiastical history is not least considerable; consisting of five books, (though there are that say he writ as many more,) which he published not till some time after those that had writ before him, whose defects and omissions he designed to supply, especially as to the church affairs of the Eastern parts, where himself lived. His style and way of writing is highly commended by the incomparable Photius, as more polished, clear, and equal, and every way adapted to an historical strain.

Contemporary with the rest was Philostorgius, a Cappadocian, the son of Carterius and Eulampia, born about the year 368. At twenty years of age he came to Constantinople, to accomplish his studies, and attained to a great proficiency in all the polite as well as useful parts, both of secular and sacred learning. As to his religion he was an Arian, and that of the worst stamp, an Eunomian, as also his parents were before him. He wrote an history of the church from the rise of Arius, till about the year 425, which he digested into twelve books, with this peculiar contrivance, that the first letter of every book, being taken in order and put together, ingeniously expresses the author's name. Though his style be generally very neat and good, yet his accounts are intolerably partial; his design throughout the whole being to expose the Catholics, and to vindicate the Arians,

especially Aetius and Eunomius, making all his relations look in favour of them. So that, as Photius well observes, his book seems rather a panegyric upon heresy, than an ecclesiastical history: for which reason he cannot safely be trusted in those things wherein the interests of Arianism, but especially Eunomianism, are particularly concerned. His history has either miscarried, or has not yet seen the light; only the large *excerpta*, which Photius long since made out of it, are still preserved, and were first published with an useful comment by that learned French lawyer, Jacobus Gothofredus, whom we mentioned before. In short, the authorities of the ancients, which we rely upon, are generally authentic and unquestionable, and need no suffrages to support their credit.

As for writers of a modern and later date, we have made little use of them, especially such as have particularly dealt in this way of writing Lives. I know the Lives of several of these fathers have of late times been written in French. But besides that my unacquaintedness with that language had kept me from knowing what they had done in that kind, their lax and diffuse way of writing Lives made me less curious and solicitous in inquiring after it. Whether herein I have done well or ill, I know not: sure I am, I have gratified my own inclinations. For it being my design to derive the notices of things immediately from the fountain-head, I thought it to little purpose to go so great a way about, for what I must come to at last. I have but one thing more, and that is to request the learned reader, that if he chance to meet with any material mistakes, besides those that lie at the printer's door, he would please to drop a soft and favourable censure, considering that the work is large, and the

searches that were to be made diffuse and various, and which necessarily drew such an hurry of thoughts along with them, as perhaps might not always leave consideration at home, minutely to weigh every thing in an exact balance. Not that I am conscious to myself of having been wanting in any point, either of fidelity or care, but that after all, I dare not confidently secure myself from error. If the reader shall be at any time at a loss in circumstances that relate to time, I desire him to consult the Chronological Table, which I have added at the end of the book.

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AN
HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
OF
THE STATE OF PAGANISM
UNDER THE FIRST CHRISTIAN EMPERORS.

SECTION I.

THE STATE OF PAGANISM UNDER THE REIGN OF CONSTANTINE THE
GREAT.

The design of this account. Constantine succeeds in the empire. His eminent preservation and escape. He assumes the title of Augustus. His march against Maxentius, and secret care and thoughtfulness about religion. The vision of the cross appearing to him, with the form of it. Hereupon instructed in, and converted to Christianity. His victory over Maxentius, and the honours done him at Rome. His first edicts in favour of Christians. The Gentiles vexed at his kindness to Christians, and his neglecting the *ludi sæculares*. The favourable edict, and miserable end of Maximinus. Licinius raises a grievous persecution in the East: is encountered by Constantine, overthrown and put to death. The imperial monarchy resting in Constantine. His laws against soothsayers and the practisers of magic charms. His care about the Lord's day, and form of prayer prescribed to his heathen soldiers to be used upon that day. The Gentiles forbidden to compel Christians to be present at their solemn rites. Laws made in behalf of Christians. The emperor's letters to the provincial governors, persuading the Gentiles to come over to Christianity. The seat of the empire removed from Rome to Constantinople, and why. The great privileges conferred upon that city. Constantine's care to rout and expose all monuments of Pagan impiety there. The successful propagation of Christianity in several countries without the bounds of the Roman empire. Severer proceedings against Pagan superstitions. Commissions despatched into several countries for the routing all monuments of idolatry. Temples shut up, and many of them demolished. Greater connivance herein at Rome and Alexandria than in other places. Constantine's death; his piety; and the happy state of his reign above that of preceding emperors.

By what means and methods the Christian religion made its own way into the world, and, unassisted by any secular power or

interest, triumphed over all the opposition that was made against it, has been considered in another place. The subject of this discourse will be to observe by what degrees Paganism, that part of it especially that was the public and standing religion of the Roman empire, a religion that for so many ages had influenced the minds of men, and seemed firmly rooted by custom, laws, and an inveterate prescription, was driven into corners, and in effect banished out of the world. The main of the story lies within the compass of the age we write of; and being a subject both pleasant in itself, and that which will reflect no mean light upon several passages in the following Lives, it will not, I conceive, be unuseful here to lay it all together: the account whereof we shall briefly deduce from the time that the empire became Christian.

II. Constantine the Great was born in Britain, as all impartial writers, not biassed either by envy at ours, or by a concernment for the honour of their own country, are willing to allow: a thing owned by some, not contradicted by any writer of that age, asserted by the very orator^a in the congratulatory oration that he made to him. His father Constantius, a wise, merciful, and virtuous prince, died at York, on the 25th of July, Ann. Chr. 306. His son Constantine had for some years resided in the court of Diocletian, and after in that of Galerius Maximian in the East, where he was kept as an honorable pledge, and as a check and restraint upon his father. Galerius hated the father,^b and was jealous of the son, whom he would have taken off by a violent death, had he not feared the army, to whom he knew Constantine was very dear. He sought therefore, under pretence of sports and martial exercises, to have despatched him out of the way; but the divine providence still brought him off. His father had often sent for him, and had as oft been delayed. And now again, in his sickness, had renewed his importunity, till Galerius, ashamed any longer to deny so reasonable a request, gave him a warrant under seal to be gone, intending nothing less, but that by some device he would stop his journey, and therefore willed him to come to him again the next morning to receive his final instructions and commands. But no sooner was the emperor gone to bed, but Constantine immediately took horse, and at every stage where he came, besides those few he

^a Paneg. Maxim. et Constant. dict. p. 3. inter Panegyricos.

^b Lactant. de mortib. persecut. c. 24. Vid. Zosim. l. ii. c. 8. Aur. Victor. de Cæsar. c. 40-

made use of, he hamstrunged all the post-horses that he left behind him. The next day Galerius called for him, but was told, that he was gone the night before: he gave order to go after him; and when he understood that all the post-horses were disabled, he burst out into an equal passion of rage and grief. Constantine, in the mean while, made haste, and arrived at York four days before his father died. Upon whose decease, and by whose last will, he succeeded in the Western Empire, unanimously saluted by the joyful acclamations of the army, and readily submitted to by the Western provinces. His image, as was customary upon the advancement of a new emperor,^c being publicly exhibited at Rome, provoked the ambition of Maxentius, son of Maximianus Herculus, who had resigned the empire to Constantius; who, looking upon himself as having a better right, and every way as fit for government, by the help of some great officers, whom he gained to his party, usurped the empire, though he paid dear for it a few years after.

III. Constantine having solemnized his father's funerals, and settled his affairs in Britain, passed over with his army into Gaul, where he resided the six first years of his reign, all which time he continued in the Gentile religion; but that, as Zonaras adds,^d he should, at the solicitation of his wife Fausta, daughter of the emperor Maximian, who stirred him up to a zealous vindication of Pagan idolatry, persecute the Christians, is, I believe, merely a conjecture of his own, unwarranted by the authority of any ancient writer. He contented himself as yet with the name of Cæsar,^e not presently assuming the title of Augustus or emperor, expecting the senior emperor should have sent him that title; but in vain: for no sooner was his image, wreathed with the imperial laurel, presented to Galerius, but he was resolved to have thrown both it and the messenger into the fire, had not his friends, upon wise considerations, overruled his anger. That therefore he might seem to do voluntarily what he could not help, he sent him the purple, but withal made Severus emperor, and gave him only the title of Cæsar. But Constantine stood in no need of his approbation to confirm his title; his father's declared will for his succession,^f and the universal consent, both

^c Zosim. l. ii. c. 9.

^d Annal. l. xiii. s. 1.


^e Panegy. Maxim. et Constant. p. 3. inter Panegyricos. Lactant. de mortib. persecut. c. 25.

^f Vid. Eumen. Paneg. Constant. dict. p. 94. inter Panegyricos.

of the army, and the whole West, put his right beyond dispute. Besides, Maximianus Herculeus, who, together with Diocletian, had some years since laid down the purple, did now again endeavour to resume it, and upon some ill success of his affairs fled into Gaul to Constantine, to whom he gave the title of Augustus, together with his daughter Fausta to wife into the bargain. Here Constantine governed with great success, till hearing from all hands of the intolerable outrages and insolencies committed by Maxentius at Rome,^g and solicited by an embassy sent to him for that purpose from the senate and people of that city,^h he took up a resolution, worthy of so great a mind, to march against him, and free the city from the tyranny and extravagancies of that usurper. No sooner was he engaged in this expedition, but, like a prudent and good man, he began to think of some assistance beyond the mere strength and courage of his army; and knowing there was great variety of deities at that time worshipped in the world, his first care was, which of these to pitch upon, and implore as his protector and tutelar guardian. He observed the fatal miscarriages of his predecessors, that had stickled hard for a multiplicity of gods, had reposed entire confidence in their assistance, and courted their favour by all the formal and fond rites of worship; notwithstanding all which, their wars had been generally unprosperous, and they themselves brought to unfortunate and untimely ends: on the contrary, that his father had acknowledged and adored one only God, and him the supreme governor of the world, who had strangely succeeded his undertakings, and given him many illustrious instances of a divine power and goodness through the whole series of his life; so thereupon he grew to this resolution, to lay aside the vulgar deities, who it is plain did but pretend to divinity, and cheat the world, and to adhere only to the God of his father; to whom therefore he addressed himself, beseeching him to make himself known to him, and effectually to assist him in this expedition. And heaven heard his prayer, and answered it in a most miraculous manner, so wonderful, that Eusebius, who reports it, grants, it would not have been credible, if he had not had it from Constantine's own mouth, who solemnly ratified the truth of it with his oath. The army was upon their march, and the emperor taken up with these devout ejaculations, when the sun

^g Euseb. de vit. Const. l. i. c. 27, etc.

^h Zonar. Annal. l. xiii. s. 1.

declining, (about three of the clock, as it is probable, in the afternoon,) there suddenly appeared a pillar of light in the heavens in the fashion of a cross, whereon (or, as others, about it) was this inscription, (in Latin, say some, but Eusebius mentions not that,) expressed in letters formed by a configuration of stars, (if what Philostorgius,¹ and some others report, be true) *ΤΟΥΤΩ ΝΙΚΑ*, “In this overcome.” Constantine was not a little startled at this sight, and so was the whole army that beheld it; and it is plain, the commanders and officers, prompted by their *aruspices*, looked upon it as an inauspicious omen, portending a very unfortunate expedition. The emperor himself knew not what to make of it, musing upon it all that evening: at night² our Lord appeared to him in a dream with the cross in his hand, which he had shewed him the day before, commanding him to make a royal standard like that which he had seen in the heavens, and cause it to be borne before him in his wars as an ensign of victory and safety. Early the next morning he got up, and told his friends what had happened: and sending immediately for workmen, sat down by them, and described to them the form of the thing, which he commanded them to make with the most exquisite artifice and magnificence, and they made it accordingly after this manner: a long spear, plated over with gold, with a traverse piece at the top a little oblique, in the fashion of a cross; to this cross-piece was fastened a four-square curtain of purple, embroidered and beset with gold and precious stones, which reflected a most amazing lustre, and towards the top of it were pictured the emperor in the midst of his sons. On the top of the shaft above the cross stood a crown overlaid with gold and jewels, within which were placed the sacred symbol, viz. the two first letters of Christ’s name in Greek, X and P, the one being struck through the other as in the margin.  This device he afterwards wore in his shields, as not only Eusebius tells us, but is evident by some of his coins extant at this day. This imperial standard in all his wars was carried before him; and my author assures us, he had often seen it. And in imitation of this he caused banners (which they called *labara*) to be made for the rest of the army, continued by his Christian successors, though not always keeping exactly to

¹ Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 6. Zonar. Annal. l. xiii. s. 1.

² Vid. etiam Lactant. de mortib. persecut. c. 44.

the same form. It is true, the Gentile writers make no express mention of this apparition of the cross, nor is it reasonable to expect they should. But this they confess, which they say was a current and uncontradicted report in the mouth of all, that before this engagement an army in the air was seen to come down from heaven, persons of great strength and stature, with vigorous and cheerful looks, and bright flaming armour, who were heard to say, "We seek for Constantine, we are come to assist him;" as the heathen orator tells us in that very oration,^k wherein he congratulated the victory.

IV. Constantine had a mighty curiosity to be farther instructed in these divine significations, and therefore calling for some Christian bishops, asked them, who this God was, and what he meant by this sign. They told him, the person that had done this was the only-begotten Son of the one only God; the sign that had appeared to him was the symbol of immortality, and the trophy of that victory, which this God, while he was upon earth, had gained over death. They explained to him the reasons of his coming down from heaven, and the state of his incarnation, and undertaking the cause of mankind. He heard their discourses with great pleasure and satisfaction, but kept himself upon the reserve, like a wary and prudent man, not giving too much way at first; he oft compared the heavenly vision with what they had discoursed to him upon that argument, and the more he did so, the more he was satisfied, not doubting but that in due time God would more perfectly discover these things to him; in order whereunto he resolved at leisure hours to peruse the holy scriptures. But herein he kept his thoughts to himself, nor indeed for the present was it safe for him to declare them. However, assured in his own mind, he marched through Italy,^l against all opposition, almost to the very walls of Rome, encamping his army (consisting, says Zosimus,^m of ninety thousand foot and eight thousand horse) in a large plain before the city. Maxentius was a man that wholly gave up himself to ease and luxury,ⁿ dividing his time between pleasure and super-

^k Nazar. Paneg. Constant. dict. p. 71. inter Panegyricos.

^l Euseb. de vit. Const. l. i. c. 37, 38. Vid. Liban. Orat. iii. vol. ii. p. 105.

^m Lib. ii. c. 15.

ⁿ Vid. Paneg. ii. Constant. dict. p. 42, etc. inter Panegyricos. Zosim. l. ii. c. 16. Lactant. de mortib. persecut. c. 44. Aur. Victor. c. 40.

stition. He never went out of the city, and seldom out of the palace; so intolerably idle, that to remove into the Salustian gardens (though to enjoy a fresh scene of pleasure) was accounted a journey, and an expedition, as the orator justly jeers him. But Constantine now approaching, he saw he must leave the city, and therefore plied the altars with numerous sacrifices, and commanded the Sibylline books to be searched; and the answer brought him was, "That that day the great enemy of Rome should perish." This he understood of Constantine, and applied the success to himself, and the rather, it is like, because it was then his birth-day. So having put all things into the best posture he could, he quitted the city, and came out against Constantine with far more numerous forces; his infantry consisting of an hundred and seventy thousand foot, and his cavalry of eighteen thousand horse, a great part whereof being Romans and Italians, and having smarted so much under his insolent tyranny, desired nothing more than to see him fall at the enemies' feet. The engagement was fierce and bloody, until victory, having hovered a while, rested on Constantine's side; for the enemies' cavalry being routed, the whole army fled, and thinking to escape the nearest way by a bridge of boats, which Maxentius had built over the Tiber, and had contrived with secret springs and engines on purpose to drown Constantine if he passed that way, were caught in their own trap, and fell into the pit which they had digged for others. For the engines giving way, the boats parted, and, overpressed with the weight of the company, sunk to the bottom of the river, and Maxentius himself along with them, whose body being found, his head was stricken off, and carried upon a pole before the army.

V. An entire victory thus obtained, Constantine made a triumphant entry into the city, being met by the senate, nobility, and infinite crowds of people, whose cheerful faces, and loud acclamations, sufficiently testified the sense they had of their deliverance, publicly styling him their saviour, redeemer, and the author of their happiness. The first thing he did was to set up a standing monument of his gratitude to that God by whose assistance he had gained the victory; which he did, or rather the senate by his direction, by erecting a statue to him in the most eminent part of the city, (and this I take to be the *signum*

which, the orator says,^o the senate had lately bestowed upon him, and which a little after he calls a “golden statue,”) holding in his hand a long spear in form of a cross, with an inscription in the basis of it to this effect:^p

HOC SALUTARI SIGNO, QUOD VERÆ VIRTUTIS
 ARGUMENTUM EST, VESTRAM URBEM
 TYRANNICÆ DOMINATIONIS JUGO
 LIBERATAM SERVAVI
 SENATUI POPULOQ. ROMANO
 IN LIBERTATEM ASSERTO
 PRISTINUM DECUS NOBILITATIS
 SPLENDOREMQ. RESTITUI.

Intimating that, under the influence of that victorious cross, he had delivered their city from the yoke of tyrannical power, and had restored to the senate and people of Rome their ancient glory and splendour. Several other monuments with inscriptions they set up for him, remains whereof are still to be found among the antiquities of Rome, particularly at the foot of the Palatine Mount, (whereon stood the imperial palace,) they erected a triumphal arch, whereon they acknowledged the great deliverance he had wrought to be done *INSTINCTU DIVINITATIS*, as well as *MENTIS MAGNITUDE*, by the impulse and assistance of God, no less than by his own courage and puissance.

VI. Having settled affairs at Rome, and endeared himself to all sorts of persons, he began by little and little more openly to declare himself in favour of the Christians, though so as not to fall presently upon the Gentiles. But that he himself was now fully settled in the Christian faith, is evident, not only from several laws which he published in favour of the clergy,^q and about the affairs of Christians, not long after his victory over Maxentius, (this victory was obtained about the midst of November, Ann. Chr. 312,) but also from the answer which the next year he gave to the Donatists,^r who petitioned him to assign them

^o Paneg. supr. citat. p. 47. Vid. Aur. Victor. c. 40.

^p Hanc Inscriptionem Latino Sermonem factam, Græce exhibet Eusebius Hist. Eccl. l. ix. c. 9.

^q Vid. Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. ii. l. 1. not. Gothofred. *ibid.*

^r Ap. Optat. de Schism. Donat. l. i. p. 25.

judges in France, to adjust the controversies between them and the catholics: "You desire judgment from me" (said he) "here below, when I myself expect the judgment of Christ." The first edict (now extant, for in it they refer to a former) that opened the way,^s was that published at Milan, anno 313, by himself and his brother-in-law Licinius, who had some time since been created Cæsar; whereby they granted a general toleration to all religions, more especially to the Christians, that none should disturb them in their profession, or their way of worship, nor hinder any that had a mind to embrace Christianity; and that their churches and places of assembly, and all the incomes and revenues belonging to them, that had been confiscated and taken from them, should forthwith be freely and entirely restored to them, and the present purchasers or possessors be repaired out of the exchequer. A copy of this edict they sent to Maximinus, who governed in the Eastern parts, requesting him to do the like. He was an obstinate and sturdy Pagan, and being neither willing to grant, nor yet daring to deny their desires, suppressed their edict, and directed a rescript to Sabinus,^t setting forth what care and pains his predecessors Diocletian and Maximian had used to secure their religion against the encroachments of Christianity, that at his coming the last year to Nicomedia, he had been earnestly solicited, both there and in other places, that no Christian might be suffered to inhabit their city: however, his pleasure was, that the governors of the provinces should use no severity against the Christians, but treat them with all mildness and moderation; and rather try by clemency and kind persuasions to reduce them to the worship of the gods, which if any of them would hearken to, they should most readily receive them; but if they had rather persist in their own religion, they should be left to the freedom of their own choice. This rescript, as it was extorted, so was it so straightened, as it did little good. The Christians knew the man too well, and the zeal and fierceness of his temper, to trust him; no provision being made in it for their churches, but only a general indemnity from trouble, they durst neither build churches, nor keep their public assemblies, nor for the present so much as openly profess themselves Christians, but kept upon their guard, awaiting a more fit and favourable season.

^s Ext. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. x. c. 5.

^t Ext. *ibid.* l. ix. c. 9.

Constantine in the mean time went on in his kindness to them ;^u their bishops he received with all due honour and respect, taking them along with him in all his journies, and oft entertaining them at his own table ; by several constitutions he exempted the clergy from all civil and secular offices and employments, with which hitherto they had been sorely vexed ; received their appeals, and appointed commissioners to umpire and end the controversies that arose amongst them ; and (which was a kindness beyond that of his successors) freed the churches from the taxes and tributes ordinarily assessed upon all other persons and societies ;^v and if the commentator upon the Theodosian Code hit it right,^w (which yet, methinks, is not very clear from the laws themselves,) he took away about this time the punishment by crucifixion, the most slavish and ignominious method of execution, (which the very heathen historian remarks in him,^x as an argument of a noble and generous mind, though he did it chiefly) out of reverence to our Saviour's Passion ; he might have added, and out of honour to that heavenly vision of the cross that had so lately appeared to him, as the forerunner of a happy victory.

VII. All this the Gentiles beheld with an envious and malicious eye, as what certainly prophesied the fatal declension, if not final overthrow of their religion ; and were more confirmed in these suspicions, when they saw the emperor neglected the celebration of the *ludi sæculares*,^y or solemn games, that were wont to be kept three days and nights with unusual magnificence and devotion, with abundance of pompous sacrifices, peculiar and appropriate hymns, and a long train of other ceremonies. They were holden but once every hundred years, or a few years under or over, whence the crier that proclaimed them used to do it in this form : "Come hither, and behold those sports, which no man alive ever saw before, or shall see again." The period of the last century was now run out, and fell in with Ann. Chr. 313. But the emperor took no notice of them, for which the Gentiles severely censured him, not only looking upon it as an argument of his aversion to their religion, but crying out against it as per-

^u Euseb. de vit. Const. l. i. c. 42. Hist. Eccl. l. x. c. 5, 6, 7, etc. Vid. lib. i. Cod. Theodos. Tit. ii. l. 1. et seqq.

^v Cod. Theodos. lib. xi. Tit. i. l. 1.

^w Vid. Gothofred. in lib. ix. Tit. v. l. unic. Tit. xviii. l. unic. Tit. xl. l. ii.

^x Aur. Victor. de Cesar. c. 41.

^y Zosim. l. ii. c. 7.

icious to the state, and that which drew down the vengeance of the gods upon it. And it added not a little to their trouble, when they found that Maximinus himself, upon whom they relied so much, began to turn upon them: for falling out with Licinius,^z and being miserably defeated by him, notwithstanding all the vain hopes and assurances wherewith his priests and soothsayers had blown him up into a confidence of success and victory, at his return home he put several of them to death as cheats and impostors, and traitors to his life and crown. And either in spite to them, or in this declining state of his affairs to keep in with so numerous a party, he published an edict in behalf of the Christians,^a wherein he confirmed the rescript which he had sent to Sabinus the year before, and supplied now what was defective in it, viz. the restitution of their churches, with all those revenues and possessions which had been seized into the exchequer, and either sold, or bestowed upon any public corporations or private persons. Not long after, just as he was resolved to try his fortunes in a second battle, he was struck with infinite pains and torments all over his body, so that in a little time he wasted to nothing, and his very eyesight failing, he became stark blind, and died at Tarsus; confessing upon his death-bed, that all this was but a just punishment upon him for his spiteful and virulent proceedings against Christ, and his religion. The churches hereupon in those parts began exceedingly to flourish, and the Christians for the present enjoyed a very serene and prosperous season.

VIII. But, alas! this peace and security lasted not long; for Licinius, who had hitherto dissembled with Constantine and the world, having now the whole Eastern empire at his command, began to shew himself in his own colours: he heartily espoused the cause of the Gentiles, which he sought every where to relieve and support, and by a law expressly forbad the Christian bishops to go to the houses of the Gentiles,^b lest by their intimate converse with them they might have an opportunity of propagating Christianity among them. Nor content with this, he took all occasions of venting his spleen and malice, raising one of the hottest persecutions against the Christians, whom he every where pursued with all possible cruelties; so that (as

^z Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. ix. c. 10.

^a Ext. ap. Euseb. *ibid.*

^b Socrat. l. i. c. 3.

Eusebius observes^c) the East and the West seemed like night and day; a dreadful darkness overspread all the Eastern parts, while the West sat under the warm and benign sunshine of prosperity and peace. In compassion to whose deplorable case, and to chastise this man's monstrous inconstancy and ingratitude, (whom no ties of blood, friendship, or interest could oblige,) and his horrible perfidiousness and hypocrisy, Constantine resolved upon an expedition against him. The armies first met at Cybalis in Pannonia,^d where Licinius was worsted, but afterwards recollecting his forces, engaged again in Thrace; at what time Constantine, in the midst of his bishops and chaplains, was earnestly engaging heaven by prayer to be on his side: while Licinius on the other hand laughed at him; and calling for his priests and fortune-tellers, his *aruspices* or diviners, fell to sacrificing, inquiring what judgment they made by inspecting the entrails of the beasts; the expounders of dreams likewise were at hand, and the *aruspices* that divined by the flight of birds, who unanimously agreed, that success would wait upon him. Whereupon he took the chief officers of his army into a private grove, thick-set with the images of their gods; where, having lighted torches, and performed the accustomed sacrifices, he made this oration to them, which my author had from the mouth of those that heard it. "Gentlemen, (said he,) and fellow-soldiers, these are the gods of our country, whom we worship according to immemorial custom and tradition derived from our ancestors. The enemy that fights against us, is one that has renounced the religion of his country, and joined himself to an impious sect, and being thus imposed on, has chosen I know not what strange deity for his God, with whose infamous sign he dishonours his army, and in confidence of it is come forth not so much against us, as against the gods themselves, whom he has thus vilified and rejected. To-day will shew which of us is in the right, and whether ours or theirs be the true gods. For either the victory which we shall obtain will evidently declare our gods to be the saviours and deliverers; or if, notwithstanding their number, this strange and obscure God of Constantine shall get the better, no man will then any longer doubt which god he ought to worship, but will go over to the most

^c De vit. Const. l. i. c. 49. etc. l. ii. c. 1, 2. etc. usque ad c. 19.

^d Vid. Zosim. l. ii. c. 18.

powerful deity, and ascribe to him the honour of the victory. And if this strange God, whom we now so much despise, shall appear to be the more powerful Being, we ourselves also ought to embrace and adore him, and bid adieu to those to whom we have lighted our tapers to so little purpose. But if ours carry the day, which no man can doubt, after such a signal victory, we may securely go on in our attempts against these impious contemners of the gods." The armies now faced each other, and Constantine, having piously recommended his cause to God, gave the signal; the imperial standard of the cross was borne before him, fifty men being peculiarly deputed to guard it, and to carry it by turns; which way soever it turned, the enemy fled, so that when the emperor saw any part of the army pressed hard upon, he called for the cross to that place, and it turned the scale. The engagement was renewed in several encounters, until the enemies' forces being wholly broken, the greatest part threw down their arms, and yielded, and Licinius himself fled the field; who finding his affairs desperate, betook himself to his old arts of treachery and dissimulation, begging peace with Constantine, who readily accepted the motion, the other ratifying it with his oath. But what obligations can hold a bad man? All is soon forgotten, and Licinius raises another army, but charges his soldiers to offer no violence to the standard of the cross, nor to engage near it. The battle, though bloody, went against him, who fled thereupon to Nicomedia, whither Constantine followed, and besieged him. But he surrendered himself upon condition of life, which he promised to lead private and obscure, and which some say Constantine granted, and confirmed with his oath. However that was, he sent him to Thessalonica, and there, upon his attempting new seditions, put him to death.

IX. By the death of Licinius the whole government of the empire devolved upon Constantine, who immediately restored peace and tranquillity to the Christians,^e and directed several orders to the provincial governors, whereby they recalled the banished, released those that had been put upon offices, restored estates to those that had lost them, set at liberty the imprisoned, and those who had been condemned to the mines, or any other slavery, all whom he bountifully rewarded; and for them that

^e Euseb. de vit. Const. l. ii. c. 19, etc.

had suffered martyrdom, he commanded their goods and lands to be restored to them that were next of kin, or, where they had no relations, to be appropriated to the uses of the church : of all which his prolix edict, sent to the provincial governors of Palestine,^f (and the same no doubt to other places,) is a sufficient evidence. Great encouragement the Gentiles, even in the Western parts, had taken from the patronage of Licinius, whom they hoped to see the prevailing conqueror, and perhaps might by some secret and mystic rites of their religion endeavour to promote his success ; so that even during those wars, Constantine was forced to lay some check upon them. By two laws,^g anno 319, the one directed to Maximus, provost of the city, the other to the people of Rome, he forbid the *aruspices* or soothsayers, and all the rest of that divining tribe, to exercise their skill within any private house, under any pretence whatsoever, adjudging the soothsayer so offending to be burnt, and the person that consulted him and received him into his house to confiscation of estate, and banishment into some remote island ; but, withal, permitting them to exercise their art at the public altars and temples, and in the open light, where every one might see and hear what was done or said. Two years after, by another rescript to the same provost,^h he gave leave, in case of mischief done by lightning, publicly to consult these *aruspices*, but with this limitation, which laid no small restraint upon them, that their answers and interpretations should be sent to the emperor in writing. Not that he approved these diabolical rites, but to try what principles they suggested to the people, and to keep them in awe, well knowing how apt the Gentiles, who were vexed at his espousing Christianity, would be under these pretences to consult and carry on designs against the peace and safety of the empire. About six months after, he prohibited all sorceries and magic charms,ⁱ that were used either against the health and lives of persons, or to inveigle men's affections to unchaste love, permitting such only as were accounted harmless, either for the curing or alleviating of distempers, or the driving away pernicious storms and tempests. The same year he provided,^j that slaves (heretofore emancipated in the Pagan temples) might be

^f Ext. ap. Euseb. de vit. Const. l. ii. c. 24. et seq.

^g Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. Tit. xvi. l. 1 et 2.

ⁱ Ibid. lib. ix. Tit. xvi. l. 3.

^h Ibid. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 1.

^j Ibid. lib. iv. Tit. vii. leg. unic.

made free in the Christian churches in the presence of the bishop; and that clergymen might do it alone, and by word of mouth, without any formal writing: that this solemnity might be performed upon a Sunday,^k though all contentions, controversies, and lawsuits, were utterly forbid upon that day. Indeed this good emperor took all imaginable care to secure the honour and observation of the Lord's day: he commanded it to be set apart for prayer and holy exercises;^l that priests and deacons should constantly attend upon them; that all persons should, as far as might be, be drawn to it; and that his great officers and commanders should set them a good example, and accompany the emperor in his devotions on that day. And that none might be then unemployed, he took care that his Pagan army should be busied in prayer to heaven, as the only giver of all victory, and upon every Lord's day should go out in the open fields, and there, upon a signal given, fall down, and offer up their requests in a form of prayer, which himself composed, and commanded them to learn by heart, in these words: "We do acknowledge thee to be the only God, we confess thee to be King, upon thee do we call for help. By thee it is that we have at any time got the victory, and subdued our enemies. To thee we thankfully ascribe all our past blessings, and from thee we expect all for the time to come. We beseech thee to preserve to us our emperor Constantine, together with his hopeful progeny, with long life, health, and victory." The like proportionable care he took for Friday, both as to the cessation from courts of judicature, and other civil affairs, in memory of our Saviour's passion, as he had done for the other in honour of his resurrection.

X. The Gentiles, vexed at this prosperity of the Christians omitted no opportunity of venting their spleen against them. In many places, and at Rome especially, they forced them to join in the celebration of their *lustra*, their solemn processions, attended with sacrifices, hymns, and festival entertainments; and sometimes with inspecting the Sibylline books, which was done in cases of any public necessity, or of invasion by a foreign enemy, or any extreme danger to the state. And perhaps they might pretend the Christians could not refuse it, without de-

^k Ibid. lib. ii. Tit. viii. l. 1.

^l Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iv. c. 18, 19, 20. Zosim. l. i. c. 8.

claring themselves enemies to the peace of the state, and the safety of the emperor, especially at this time, when the Goths had made a violent irruption into Thrace, and the empire was disquieted with intestine wars; I mean, the last attempts of the emperor Licinius. But this was complained of to Constantine, who by a law,^m bearing date May the 30th, anno 323, expressly forbid any such compulsion to be used towards Christians, under the penalty of being publicly beaten with clubs, if the person offending was of plebeian rank, but if of better quality, of being severely fined. And in this edict, as he styles Christianity “the most holy law,” so he calls Gentilism *alienam superstitionem*, “a strange superstition.” Next he took care, that none should be governors or presidents, but who were Christians; or if Gentiles, that they should not offer sacrifices; and this to extend even to the prætorian prefects, the highest officers in the empire. He published a law,ⁿ likewise, which he sent to the governors of provinces, for the erecting, enlarging, and beautifying the Christians’ churches at his own charge, notice whereof he gave by letters to the bishops of the several churches. That to Eusebius, being the first that was written, is still extant, written, anno 324, soon after the final defeat of Licinius; whom he styles in it that great dragon, which by his ministry God had removed from the government. Besides this, he wrote a large exhortatory epistle to the provincial governors of the East; wherein, with great wisdom and piety, he persuades all his subjects to embrace Christianity, a religion attested by the heathen deities themselves, whereof he assures them himself was an ear-witness; Apollo’s oracle confessing, that certain righteous persons were the cause why he could no longer deliver out true oracles. And when Diocletian (whom he then attended) asked, who these men were? one of the priests answered, they were the Christians: which so enraged the bloody emperor, that he immediately published the most severe merciless edicts against the Christians, commanding the judges to contrive more exquisite instruments of torment than what the law had hitherto provided for them. But though he endeavoured both by prayers and arguments to bring them over to the truth, yet he still left them to the freedom of their own choice. He would not, he tells them, force them to change their religion, nor that one

^m Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. ii. l. 5.

ⁿ Euseb. de vit. Const. c. 44, 45. et seq.

party should offer any injury or violence to the other upon that account: if they would still obstinately persist in their old way, let them enjoy their temples, stuffed with nothing but lies and falsehoods; assuring them it was not true, what some reported, that he had abolished the rites of their temples, and their religious solemnities. He wished, indeed, they would steer the same course that he had done, and doubted not to have persuaded the world to it, if the power and efficacy of an inveterate error, deep rooted in the minds of men, had not prejudiced the designed reformation of mankind. About the same time he repealed the edicts of his predecessors,^o which, in maintenance of the Pagan superstitions in the times of persecution, they had put out against the Christians, and particularly the cruel and unjust laws and constitutions of Licinius,^p as, soon after, he did the acts and decrees of his judges, though this was not to extend to any thing which either he or they had warrantably done according to law.

XI. Constantine, having now restored perfect peace and tranquillity to the Roman world, took up a resolution of transferring the seat of the empire to some other place: whether it was, because he was offended with the people of Rome, for the rude reflections wherewith they affronted him, when, on a festival day, going up with his retinue to the capitol, he spake contemptibly of those sacred rites, (as Zosimus reports it;^q) or whether because he would not honour that place with his court, that for so many ages had been the chief stage of idolatry, and the scene of martyrdom and persecution; or whether because he thought the Eastern parts did more immediately require his presence to defend them, not only against the encroachments of the Persians, but against the inroads of the northern nations, which at that time did usually thereabouts break in upon them; or whatever else the occasion was, it was certainly a policy very fatal and unfortunate to the empire. After many designments, he pitched upon Byzantium, a city of Thrace, situate upon the isthmus, or neck of the Hellespont, a place which nature seemed to have formed on purpose to command the world. He re-edified and enlarged it, beautified it with the most stately and magnificent buildings, and all the ornaments which art could

^o Sozom. l. i. c. 8.

^p Cod. Theodos. lib. xv. Tit. xiv. l. 1, 2, et 3.

^q Lib. ii. c. 29, 30.

contrive, or wealth could purchase, or any curious pieces of antiquity, which Rome, or any other parts, could furnish it with. He endowed it with vast privileges and immunities, peopled it with the best families he could draw from Rome, or other places, and by a law (engraven upon a stone pillar, and placed in the *strategium*, near the emperor's statue on horse-back) commanded, it should be called New Rome, though in despite of his edict it retained the honour of his name, and keeps it to this day. He laid the foundations November the 26th, anno 328, finished and dedicated it about two years after. But what is most proper to be here observed, is, that he built many noble churches and oratories both in the city and suburbs,^r wherein he suffered no Gentile altars or images to be placed, nor any Pagan festivities to be solemnized; nay, suffered the follies, imposture, and vanities of them to be exposed in the open streets. I know Zosimus tells another story:^s that Constantine set up the statues of the heathen deities in several public places of the city, and that at one end of the four-square portico, that encompassed the forum, he erected two chapels on purpose; in one whereof he placed the image of Rhea, the mother of the gods, in the other that of the Genius, or fortune of Rome. But his known partiality in matters of this nature abates his credit, especially when set against the express testimony of those who lived at that time, and saw what was done. And probable it is, that to make the best of a bad cause, he laid hold of any twig which he could bend the contrary way, and represented that as done in honour of their gods, which was done only by way of derision and contempt. But though Constantine thus routed the monuments of Pagan idolatry, yet did he not demolish or deface the temples, some of which were here standing until the times of Theodosius.^t Indeed, he took away their sacred treasures,^u and seized the rents and revenues belonging to them, which he employed in building those noble and magnificent structures wherewith he adorned that imperial city. Nor did the barbarous countries go without their share in these happy influences of Christianity. The Indians^x were brought over to the Christian faith, by the ministry of Frumentius, who had been

^r Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 48. Socrat. l. i. c. 16.

^s Lib. ii. c. 31.

^t Liban. Orat. de Templ. p. 9.

^u Id. *ibid.* et p. 22. et Orat. xxvi. vol. ii. p. 591.

^x Rufin. l. i. c. 9. Socrat. l. i. c. 19. Sozom. l. ii. c. 24.

brought up the greatest part of his time there, and whom Athanasius having ordained bishop, was sent again amongst them. The Iberi, since called Georgians, a people near the Caspian sea, were converted by means of a woman-slave,^y who being a Christian, was become famous among them for the incomparable strictness and piety of her life, and her miraculous cures: among others, she cured the queen of the country, and thereby converted her, and by her solicitations, the king himself; who, convening his subjects, preached to them, and persuaded them to embrace the faith. Hereupon a church is erected, and an embassy sent to Constantine to request, that bishops and preachers might be sent amongst them to carry on and complete the work: which was done accordingly, and the emperor, to give an additional honour to their king Bacurius, created him *Comes Domesticorum*, or comptroller of his household; from whose own mouth my author received this relation,^z with many more particulars, which he sets down at large. The like success the Christian religion had in other countries;^a for by reason of the frequent wars which the Romans had with the Barbarians, many Christian priests were taken captive, who employed all their time and pains to subdue those countries to the faith of Christ. And by this means were the inhabitants of the Rhine, the Celtæ, and the remotest parts of Gaul, the Goths, and those who dwelt upon the Danube, brought to embrace and entertain the gospel.

XII. The emperor had hitherto tried by patience and persuasion, and by all the arts of lenity and gentleness, to reclaim the Gentile world: but finding the greatest part perverse and obstinate, he proceeded to rout idolatry by rougher methods. To which purpose he gave out despatches,^b which the Christians that were about the court greedily caught, and readily transmitted into the several countries, and put them into present execution. The commissioners entered every where into the temples, and threw open the doors of their most secret revestries, so that those mysteries, which before-time none but the priests might behold, were now publicly exposed to the eyes of the people, and many of the temples untiled, and laid open to all storms and weather. The common people were afraid, and

^y Rufin. l. i. c. 10. Socrat. l. i. c. 19. Sozom. l. ii. c. 7.

^z Rufin. l. i. c. 10.

^a Sozom. l. ii. c. 6.

^b Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 54. Sozom. l. ii. c. 5.

durst make no resistance ; and the priests and flamens, being left alone, quietly submitted, and did themselves bring forth their most venerable deities, which being stripped of their external pageantry and ornament, were shewn in their own colours to every vulgar eye. The statues of gold, and like precious materials, were melted down, and coined into money ; the best of those that were curiously wrought in brass were brought up to Constantinople, where they were drawn with ropes up and down the streets, and set up for the people to behold and laugh at. Here might you have seen the Pythian, there the Sminthian Apollo : in the circus were placed the famous tripods brought from Delphos ; in the palace, the Muses of Helicon ; in another place, the great god Pan, so solemnly and universally worshipped in Greece ; planted there as standing monuments to posterity of the folly and madness of Pagan superstition. At Aphaca in Phœnicia, near the top of mount Libanus, stood a famous temple in the midst of a grove, dedicated to Venus, where the men busied themselves in performing the rites of worship, while the women prostituted themselves to all manner of lewdness in every corner. This temple the emperor commanded to be pulled down to the ground, and all its rich gifts and ornaments to be disposed of, and that lewd society to be dispersed and scattered. There was another dedicated to her at Heliopolis, in the same country, where the men gave leave to their wives and daughters to prostitute themselves in honour of the goddess ; this he abolished, and built a church in the room of it, and furnished it with a bishop, and other ministers of religion. Abraham's oak at Mamre, which for so many ages had been annually defiled with Jewish and Heathenish solemnities, he removed, and erected a Christian church there. He demolished the celebrated temple of Æsculapius at Ægæ in Cilicia, where that pretended god was worshipped for his eminent cures, and frequent appearances in dreams to his votaries. At Alexandria, he dispersed and banished the Androgyni, or priests of Nile,^c who used to perform ridiculous ceremonies to that river, accounted by them a deity, and caused the Nilometrium, or famous cubit, wherewith they went every year to measure the height of the river, to be removed out of the temple of Serapis (where it was religiously kept) into the Christian church at Alexandria : and when the

^c Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iv. c. 25. Socrat. l. i. c. 18.

people cried out hereupon, that the goddess would be angry, and the Nile no longer overflow its banks, the event shewed the prediction to be false and foolish, the river overflowing the country the next year in larger measures and proportions than it had done before. In short, by several laws, he forbad to offer sacrifices, or to erect any images to the gods, or to consult their priests and oracles, or to exercise any of their mysterious rites. And though Libanius more than once affirms, that their temples were left open,^d and sacrifices permitted at Rome and Alexandria, yet was it no otherwise true, than as they could do it by stealth, or by connivance, not by any public allowance or constitution of the empire. I will not deny but that Rome and Alexandria, being the capital cities of the empire, and places where Gentilism had taken the deepest root, and whence it could not be easily plucked up, a more particular permission or connivance might be allowed there. But when my author affirms,^e that Constantine, though he took away their revenues, made no alteration in the ancient usages of their worship, he must be understood of the former part of his reign, it being unquestionably evident, from the testimony both of Christian and Gentile writers,^f that in his latter times he shut up all, and demolished some of their temples, and forbad their sacrifices and superstitions. Indeed, that he might not altogether seem to exasperate and provoke them, he suffered the people, at least in some places, still to choose their priests and flamens, and those priests to enjoy the temporal honours and immunities belonging to their office, as appears by a law which he made, anno 335,^g and directed to Felix, the prætorian prefect of Africa, to that purpose. By these smart and vigorous proceedings against the idolatry and impieties of the heathen world, Satan every day visibly fell as lightning from heaven, and the great dragon, that old serpent, which had so long deceived the world, fled before, and fell under the power of the cross. In memory whereof, this good emperor caused some of his coins, still extant, to be stamped on the reverse with the figure of a serpent bowing under, and struck through with the banner of the cross. And

^d Orat. de Templ. p. 20, 21.

^e Id. *ibid.* p. 9, 22.

^f Hieron. Chr. ad Ann. 332. Oros. Hist. l. vii. c. 23. Eunap. in vit. Ædes. p. 36. Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 2.

^g *Ibid.* lib. xii. Tit. i. l. 21.

in the portico before his palace,^h he caused his picture to be drawn at full length with the cross over his head, and a dragon under his feet struck through with darts, and thrown into the sea, to denote by what assistance he had routed and ruined the old enemy of mankind, and had cast him down to hell. All which, my author says, was foretold by that of the prophet,ⁱ “That the Lord, with his sore, and great, and strong sword, should punish Leviathan, that crooked serpent, and slay the dragon that is in the sea.”

XIII. And now God, having brought about so great a change and reformation, and advanced Christianity, which had lately been so much despised and trampled on, to be the religion of the empire, took this excellent prince into a better world. He died at Nicomedia, May the 22nd, anno 337, to the irreparable loss of the church, and the grief of all good men. I shall conclude his reign with the comparison which Eusebius, in an oration delivered at the solemnization of his Tricennalia, about a year before his death, makes between this and the preceding times, the sum of whose discourse upon that argument we shall here represent.^j “The former emperors,” says he, “were passionate admirers of their gods, and the people every where honoured them with statues and images, which they erected to them in fields and houses, yea in their very butteries and bed-chambers; chapels and porticos, groves and temples, were with infinite pains and charge set apart for their worship, and enriched with the most costly ornaments and oblations: the fruit of all which devotion was nothing else but war and fighting, mutinies and seditions, which filled the world with blood and slaughters: their gods, by their feigned answers and oracles, vainly flattering them into hopes of prosperity and success, when, alas! they could not foresee that sad fate that did attend themselves. Encouraged with this assurance, and carrying the statues of their fond and senseless deities at the head of their army, they marched into the field: whereas Constantine, armed with no other breast-plate but that of piety, nor carrying any other banner than that of the cross, at once triumphed both over his enemies, and their gods. In a grateful sense of so signal a mercy he openly owned the power of that triumphal sign, a monument whereof he set up in the midst of Rome, and commanded that all

^h Euseb. de. vit. Const. l. iii. c. 3.

ⁱ Isai. xxvii. 1.

^j Orat. de laud. Const. c. 9.

should look upon it as the tutelar and guardian power of the Roman empire. He taught the mystery of it to all, and especially his soldiers, and trained them up both in the principles and practice of true prayer and holy adoration ; and that they must not depend upon the strength of their arms, the greatness of their courage, the multitude of their number, but look up to God as the only fountain of all power and victory, and observe the Lord's-day as most proper for their devotions. His own vacant time he spent in prayer, reading the scriptures, and other divine exercises and employments, and he formed his whole court after his example. He paid a just reverence to the victorious cross, and erected triumphal arches to it in every place ; and, with a noble and magnificent bounty, commanded churches and oratories to be built, and those to be re-edified which had been demolished by the rage and madness of his predecessors, who taking upon them to fight against God, had all come to untimely ends, and both they and their families been swept away as in a moment. While this emperor, guarded by the salutary standard, carried victory about him, and had founded newer and more stately churches, and rebuilt the old ones into greater magnificence than before ; conspicuous instances whereof were to be seen at Constantinople, Nicomedia, Antioch, and in Palestine, where at Jerusalem he raised an immense and admirable structure over the place of our Saviour's sepulchre, which he enriched and adorned with the most exquisite artifice. Three other incomparable churches he built : the one over the place of our Lord's birth, another at the place of his ascension, and a third at the place of his passion. So illustrious a piety God was pleased to reward with the enlargement of his empire, and the prosperity and security of his family, besides those eminent blessings which were reserved for his posterity : a signal evidence of that divine power that superintended the happiness of the empire, that could so equally distribute recompenses suitable to each party : for all those that had ruined and laid waste the churches, had quickly reaped the wages of their impiety, and had been swept away without leaving either house or posterity behind them. But this good emperor having endeared himself to heaven by an unusual piety and bounty, had accordingly engaged God to be the saviour and protector of his empire, his family, and his posterity."

SECTION II.

THE CONDITION OF THE GENTILES UNDER THE REIGN OF CONSTANTINE JUNIOR, CONSTANTIUS, AND CONSTANS.

The division of the empire among the three sons of Constantine. Their care to advance the Christian, and to suppress the Pagan religion. Provision made against violation of the tombs and sepulchres of the dead. Sacrifices prohibited, but temples left standing. Julius Firmicus's address to the emperors against the errors of Paganism. Magnentius's usurpation of the empire: his overthrow, and death. The favours allowed by him to the Gentiles recalled, and sacrifices utterly abolished and made capital. Curious and unlawful arts strictly forbidden. A law to that purpose, wherein the several sorts of diviners are particularly enumerated, Haruspices, Mathematici, Harioli, Augures, &c., what and who these were, and how distinguished. Constantius at Rome removes the altar of victory. All practisers of divination severely prohibited to come near the court. The occasion of that law. Barbatio the general's consulting with soothsayers about an extraordinary omen. That treason, how brought to light. Constantine's jealousy of his cousin Julian, for his secret dealings with magicians. Several in the Eastern parts punished and put to death upon pretence of consulting with oracles. Constantius's last law to exempt the clergy from civil offices. His death.

CONSTANTINE, upon his death-bed, divided the empire among his three sons; to Constantine, his eldest, he assigned Britain, Spain, Gaul, and part of Proconsular Africa; to Constans, the youngest, Italy, Illyricum, Macedonia, Greece, the parts that border upon the Euxine, and the remainder of Africa; to Constantius, the middle son, Mysia, Thrace, Asia, the East, and Egypt. The first of these princes lived but a little while, and the reigns of the two other were so taken up with the Arian and other controversies, which unhappily divided the Christian world, and distracted the state as well as the church, that we meet not with much relating to the Gentiles within this period. Sozomen,^j in the general, gives us this account of the state of things, that the emperors trod in their father's steps, in their care of and kindness to the church, investing the clergy, their children, and servants, with many peculiar privileges and immunities; they not only confirmed their father's laws, but enacted new ones, prohibiting any either to offer sacrifices, or to pay any adoration to the images of the gods, or to exercise any part of Pagan superstition. The temples that stood either in the cities or fields, they commanded to be shut up, or bestowed them upon churches,

^j Lib. iii. c. 17.

where they wanted either room or materials to build with; for it was their great care either to repair ruined churches, or to erect new ones more splendid and magnificent. Constantine had reigned scarce three years, when quarrelling with his brother Constans about the division of the empire, he marched with his army as far as Aquileia to encounter him, where he was slain about the latter end of April, anno 340, but whether by treachery (as some report) or in open fight, is not easy to determine. His death was no less passionately than elegantly bewailed by a Grecian sophist of that time, in a funeral oration still extant.^k

II. The first thing that occurs after his death, is a law of Constans,^l published two months after, directed to Titian, prefect of Rome, against those that violated and demolished the tombs and sepulchres of the dead, and took thence the materials to any other use, with a penalty upon the person that did it, of being condemned to the mines, if he did it of his own head, and of banishment, if done at the command of his lord: and that wherever any of those materials should be found, that house or edifice should be forfeited to the crown. It was occasioned, as is probable, by the forward zeal of some Christians, who resolving to destroy all monuments of Gentile superstition, wherever they met with them, flew upon, rifled, and defaced tombs and burying-places, which were wont to be consecrated with heathen rites, and adorned many times with altars and images. And not content to spoil and pull down the sepulchres themselves, they often took the stones and other materials to their own use. The penalty provided was severe enough, but did not, it seems, wholly cure the distemper; so that about nine years after, he was fain to reinforce it by a second law more punctual and particular,^m wherein provision is made, both against the offenders in time past, whether defacers, demolishers, conveyers, converters, buyers, or concealers of any part or parcel of them, as also against the like offences for the time to come; and that the officers, to whom it appertained, should from time to time inspect the monuments, and see to the necessary reparations of them; and if any of them neglected their duties herein, they should not only incur the penalties inflicted upon the transgressors of this law, but the known ordinary punishment of such offenders,

^k Μονωδ. εἰς Κωνσταντίν. Gr. Lat. a Fr. Morell. edit. 1616.

^l Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. Tit. xvii. l. 1.

^m Ibid. l. 2.

which was that of death. The like care herein Constantius took afterwards, by two laws very express in this matter.ⁿ

III. The emperor Constans being now at peace, resumed his zeal against the Gentiles, whose follies he restrained by this following law, the inscription whereof we have duly rectified :^o

“ The emperors Constantius and Constans, the august, to Madalian, vice-prætorian præfect.

“ Let superstition cease, let the madness of sacrificing be abolished : for whoever shall presume contrary to the constitution of our father, a prince of blessed memory, and contrary to this command of our clemency, to offer sacrifices, let a proper and convenient punishment be inflicted, and execution presently done upon him. Received, Marcellinus and Probinus being consuls.” That is, anno 341.

This was followed with another the next year,^p (for the date of the consulships, as now extant, is plainly mistaken,) concerning the temples at Rome, that although all idolatrous superstition should be rooted up, yet it was his majesty’s pleasure, that the temples that stood in the fields and highways (for of those within the walls there seems to have been no question, they being spared as highly conducing to the splendour and ornament of the city) should not be pulled down or defaced, many of the solemn sports and games, wherewith the people were wont to be entertained, depending upon, and having taken their rise and original from these temples : so that the structures were left standing either for delight or ornament, only the abuse and idolatry of them was quite removed. Encouraged with these laws, Julius Firmicus Maternus wrote about this time his book *De errore profanarum Religionum*, which he dedicated to the two brother-emperors ; wherein, after he had run down and exposed the notorious follies and absurdities of Paganism, he addresses to those emperors,^q that they would go on to make a perfect reformation, and by very severe laws cut off what did yet remain, that the Roman world might be no longer infected with such pernicious errors and impieties, and wickedness gain ground by custom and connivance. He knew there wanted not those that opposed it,

ⁿ Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. Tit. xvii. l. 3, 4.

^o Ibid. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 2.

^p Ibid. l. 3. vid. Gothofr. in loc.

^q De error. prof. Relig. p. 27.

men fond of their own ruin: but God had committed the government of the world to their majesties for this end, that they might be physicians to heal the wounds that were made upon the souls of men, and they must not in this case stand to humour every palate; inveterate diseases were not to be cured but by unpleasing physic, which must be taken, how bitter soever it seem to the patient, lest by too much indulgence the distemper grow worse, and call for sharper methods, and it come at last to the knife and the caustic. A little more to what they had already done,^r would lay the Devil fully prostrate, and make the contagion of idolatry (the venom whereof grew weaker every day) wholly to evaporate and expire; they should therefore exalt and advance the banner of the cross, which would be a certain forerunner of success and victory; they should quite remove the deities that were accounted the safety and ornament of their temples,^s and either melt them down into money, or some other use, and transfer all their gifts and treasures to the profit of the empire. Great things God had already done for them as the reward of a well-begun zeal and piety, and greater blessings were reserved when they should have finished and crowned the work: all which should oblige them, with a pure mind and a pious conscience, sincerely to look up to heaven, to solicit the Divine assistance, and implore the help of our blessed Saviour, and worship him only with spiritual sacrifices: by which means they might assure themselves of peace and plenty, victory and triumph; that they themselves should rule quietly and securely, and the world enjoy the happiness and prosperity of their government. Constantius being about this time informed that many Gentile masters, to put the greater affront and dishonour upon the Christian profession,^t used to sell their female slaves that were Christians to be prostituted at the stews, restrained it; ordering that none but Christians should have leave to buy them, and that they might pay their ransom, and set them free.

IV. Anno 350, Magnentius, a great commander in the army, having treacherously murdered the emperor Constans, usurped the empire, as, upon notice of his death, Vetrannio also did in Pannonia, and Nepotian, nephew to Constantine the Great, at Rome. But these two were soon cut off, the former by Con-

^r De error. prof. Relig. p. 36.

^s Ibid. p. 51, 52.

^t Cod. Theodos. lib. xv. Tit. viii. l. 1.

stantius, the latter by Anicetus, whom Magnentius had constituted prefect of Rome. Magnentius himself made shift to hold out a few years, and like a prosperous usurper went on without control, raising taxes at pleasure, proscribing, nay, killing any that stood in his way, and confiscating and seizing their estates; where it made for his interest, he connived at the Gentiles, and persecuted the Christians, many of whom he caused to be put to death. But after three years and six months' tyranny, he was finally routed by Constantius, and equally despairing of pardon and success, ran himself through and died. Constantius reversed the proceedings which he or his judges had illegally acted,^u and restored persons to their just rights and possessions; and for the better quieting men's minds, published a general act of indemnity and oblivion,^x excepting only five of the greater and more capital crimes, which he left to the ordinary procedure of the law. And whereas Magnentius, to curry favour with the Gentiles at Rome, had given them leave to celebrate their sacrifices in the night,^y Constantius immediately abolished those nocturnal sacrifices, and took away the licence that had been granted them: nay, by another law,^z he expressly forbid all manner of sacrifices; and commanded that every where, both in city and country, especially within the prefecture of Italy, (for which the edict seems more immediately calculated,) the temples should be shut up, and none suffered to go into them, (agreeable to what is related by other writers of this time);^a that the person offending should lose his head, and forfeit his estate to the exchequer; and the governors of provinces be punished, if they neglected the execution of this law. I know the names of the consuls usually affixed to this rescript, make it to be passed anno 346. But it being directed to Taurus, the prætorian prefect of Italy, and he not being made prefect until the year 353, does with far greater probability fasten it upon this time, and the occasion we have mentioned; when the emperor, no doubt, highly resented the kindness which the Gentiles had shewn Magnentius, and the favours he had conferred upon them. A like command to this he issued out three years after,^b making it

^u Cod. Theodos. lib. xv. Tit. xiv. l. 5.

^x Ibid. lib. ix. Tit. xxxviii. l. 2.

^y Ibid. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 5.

^z Ibid. l. 4.

^a Sozom. l. iii. c. 17. Liban. Orat. ix. fun. in Julian. p. 253.

^b Cod. Theodos. l. xvi. Tit. x. l. 6.

capital for any to offer sacrifice, or adore the images ; these vigorous proceedings did, it seems, strike a terror into the greatest, even into Julian himself, so that about this time he was wont to rise at midnight,^c and in the most secret manner pay his devotions to Mercury.

V. Constantius was an utter enemy to magic, and all curious and unlawful arts, than which nothing more common among the Gentiles, and indeed were the very life and spirit of their declining superstition. And therefore the next year, anno 357, he put out a law against all curiosity in this kind,^d that no man, under the penalty of his head, should dare to consult any of these masters of divination, who in the body of the rescript are reckoned up by their several titles ; Haruspices, who made a judgment concerning future events from sacrifices, and inspecting the entrails of beasts slain to that purpose ; Mathematici, who judged of things by the course and position of the stars ; Harioli, who attended the altars, offered up sacrifices and supplications to the deity, and received the answer the demon returned ; Augures, who divined by the flight or chattering of birds ; Vates, who were more immediate chaplains to the deity, and being filled, as they gave out, with an enthusiastic inspiration, gave out oracles to the votaries that required them ; Chaldæans, or fortune-tellers, were much the same with the Mathematici, who read men's doom by calculating their nativities, and finding what constellations governed at the time of their birth ; Magi, were properly such as dealt in charms and conjurations, framed into odd and uncouth schemes of words ; Malefici, in a strict sense, were those that traded in necromancy, but are here used in a more general way, as comprehending all the other professors of these diabolic arts. This was at the beginning, and about the end of the same year out comes another law against them that exercised arts of magic,^e by which they undertook to disorder the course of nature, and do mischief to the lives of innocent persons, and by peculiar charms to disquiet and conjure up spirits, and the souls of the departed, that they might become instruments of revenge upon their enemies ; such persons, as being contrary to nature, he commands to be destroyed, *ferali peste*, that is, as some think, by being burnt alive, the ordinary punish-

^c Am. Marcel. l. xvi. c. 5.

^d Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. Tit. xvi. l. 4. ubi vid. comm. Gothofr.

^e Ibid. l. 5.

ment of magicians among the Romans, or as others more probably, by being thrown to wild beasts. Either of them severe enough, and yet not exceeding the merits of such enormous villanies.

VI. About the end of April this year, Constantius came to Rome, where he took care to regulate several things that were amiss there. And now probably it was, that he took away the famous altar, and image of victory, which being placed upon a triumphal chariot, stood in the entrance or portico of the capitol. It was the only idol left there, for though it had been removed by Constans, yet was it again restored by Magnentius, and now taken away a second time, to the infinite grief and resentment of the Gentiles, who heavily complained of it; ^f especially Symmachus, who raised no little stir and bustle about it afterwards. After a month's stay at Rome, the emperor returned back to Milan, where finding that notwithstanding all the provision he could make, the trade of divination still went on, and crept into his very court, to the hazard of his person and government, he published a most severe law the year following against this sort of men; ^g setting forth, that although in any part of the world they were to be accounted enemies of mankind, yet when they presumed to intrude into his court or presence, they offered a more immediate violence to majesty. If therefore any magician or diviner, or any practising that way, should be found either in his court, or in that of Cæsar, be he of what rank or condition soever, he should not escape being tortured, though in other cases the law exempted persons of honour and dignity from that penalty; so that if upon proof he still persisted to deny the fact, notwithstanding the privilege of his place and quality, he should, as in ordinary cases of high treason, be put upon the rack, and have his flesh raked off his sides with *ungulæ*, or iron hooks, made on purpose to torment the malefactor. And indeed it was but time for Constantius to look about him, both with respect to himself and Julian. As to himself, he had a fresh instance at hand. Barbatio, general of the foot, ^h had a swarm of bees settled in his house; the man was infinitely concerned at the accident, and presently went to consult the soothsayers, who told him, it portended some extraordinary

^f Vid. Symmach. Epist. l. x. Ep. 54.

^g Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. Tit. xvi. l. 6.

^h Am. Marcell. l. xviii. c. 3.

events, and gave him intimation of an advancement to the empire. This the man kept secret, and marched out with the army; but his wife, jealous of her own interest, wrote to him, to beg, that after Constantius's death, which was then at hand, and himself, according to his expectations, advanced to the empire, he would not despise her; nor prefer Eusebia, the queen dowager that was to be, a woman of exquisite beauty, before her. A copy of this letter her maid carried privily to court, whereby the whole design came to light; for which both Barbatio and his wife died, and several others were racked as accomplices in the treason. And then for Julian, Constantius had for some time suspected him of hatching ill designs, and knew that his chief converse was with this sort of men, who, by all the little insinuations of their art, endeavoured to push forward his youthful ambition. He always kept a company of magicians about him, who went in the habit, and under the notion, of philosophers; and sent for a famous pagan priest out of Greece, with whom alone he used to spend some time, and transact some affairs in private, just before he broke out into an open rebellion against Constantius. These things every day more and more alarmed the emperor's suspicions, and awakened his severity against these men, especially after he understood that there was a mighty concourse to Abydus,ⁱ a town in Thebais, famous for a temple of Besa, the topical god of that country, and he as much celebrated for his oracles; and those who could not come themselves, sent their questions in writing. This was represented to the emperor as a thing of dangerous consequence, who immediately despatched away Paulus and some others into the East to examine the matter, and call persons to account. Among others, Simplicius was accused for having put questions to the oracle about his obtaining the empire, and though commanded to be tortured, was only banished; many more were banished, or racked, or tormented, and their estates confiscated. And so rigorous were the proceedings, (if my author say true,) that if a man wore but an amulet about his neck for the cure of a quartan ague, or any other distemper, or walked but at night among the tombs and monuments, he was forthwith challenged for a conjuror, and as a person trading in necromancy, and was put to death as guilty of high-treason. The last

ⁱ Am. Marcell. l. xix. c. 12.

thing considerable that Constantius did, was a law (if not the last, the last of this nature) he made to exempt the clergy in every place,^k whether in city or country, from all civil offices, which he did the rather, he says, because he rejoiced and gloried in nothing more, than in his munificence to the church, well knowing that the empire was better preserved and kept in order by religion, than by any external offices, or corporal labours whatsoever. This law bears date March the 17th, anno 361, at Antioch, whither he had retired from the Persian expedition for his winter-quarters, and whence he set out to go against Julian, but died in his march at Mopsucrenæ, October the 5th, others say November the 3rd, partly wearied out with troubles, partly heart-broken with the ingratitude and rebellion of his cousin Julian; wherein, now it was too late, he was sufficiently sensible of his error, it being one of the three things he solemnly repented of upon his death-bed, that he had taken him into a partnership of the empire.

^k Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. ii. l. 16.

SECTION III.

THE STATE OF PAGANISM UNDER THE REIGN OF JULIAN.

Julian's parentage, and education under several masters. His inclinations to Paganism nourished by Libanius and others, who blew him up with hopes of the empire. His subtle dissimulation of Christianity confessed by his greatest admirers. His taking upon him the place of a reader, and erecting an oratory to St. Mamas the martyr. His residence at Athens, and frequent consulting with Pagan priests. His driving away the demons at a consult, by an undesigned making the sign of the cross. Advanced to the dignity of Cæsar, upon what account. Sent into Gaul to govern there, and to repress the Germans. Auspicious omens at his arrival there. His great success, and assuming the empire. An account of it sent to Constantius, and his passionate resentment of it. Julian's preparation to march against Constantius. His gradual opening his resolutions to restore Paganism, and his caressing the greater cities to that purpose. The forwardness of some zealous Gentiles in setting up their superstitions. His arrival at Constantinople, and public care about the restitution of the Gentile rites, their temples, altars, sacrifices, ceremonies, revenues, &c. His zeal for these things in his own person and practice. The principal methods he made use of for the suppressing Christianity, and restoring the Gentile religion, considered. His design to reform Paganism from its more gross abuses; an abstract of his wise discourses, and prudent directions, to that end. His endeavours to conform it to the excellent institutions of Christianity; his letter to Arsacius, chief priest of Galatia, to that purpose. His taking all occasions of exposing Christians, and making them and their religion appear

ridiculous. His wit mainly employed that way. The title of Galileans by law fixed upon them. The blasphemous speeches and practices of others after his example, and their fatal and miserable ends. His traducing the emperor Constantine, as a person dear to Christians. His attempts to bring Christians low, and to weaken their power and interest, by banishing them from all places of honour and trust, by unreasonable fines and taxations, and by setting the several parties of Christians at variance with each other. Instances given of all these. His conniving at the persecution raised against the Christians by his commanders and governors. His abstaining from open persecution, why ; though it fell heavy upon particular persons and places. His discouraging and driving away the bishops and clergy, and abolishing their revenues and privileges. The policy of that attempt. His encouraging the Jews, and restoring their temple and religion, in opposition to the Christians. The advantages which he propounded to himself therein. His endeavour to extinguish all human learning among the Christians, thereby to make them more pliable to Gentile insinuations. The folly of that attempt. The infinite encouragement he gave to philosophers, and all that appeared able and zealous against Christians. His project to ensnare unwary Christians into a compliance with Pagan superstition. Some instances given of it. The historical part of the remainder of his time briefly prosecuted. His expedition against Persia. The orations he composed in his march in honour of the Pagan deities. His coming to Antioch, and reproaching them with the notorious neglect of the Gentile rites. The scurrilous reflections cast upon him by the people of that city. His writing his *Misopogon* a satirical discourse, to be revenged of them. His departure from Antioch, and execrable divinations at Carre, the relics whereof found after his death. His engagement with the Persians, ill success, and death. The author of his death unknown : several reports concerning it : charged by Libanius upon the Christians. Some extraordinary passages relating to his death. His character. The seasonableness of his death to the Christians. Nazianzen's triumphant discourse upon it.

JULIAN was the youngest of the three sons of Constantius, brother by the father's side to Constantine the Great. He was born at Constantinople, anno. 331. His mother Basilina died soon after, and his father was taken off in the first of Constantius. At seven years of age he was committed to the tutorage of Mardonius^k the Eunuch, who read to him, and formed his tender years to a strict course of virtue, and an utter aversion to all those pleasures and divertisements that are apt to debauch the minds and manners of young gentlemen : and therefore it is a great mistake in Baronius, when from Julian's^l account of his education under this man, he makes him to have instilled into him the first principles of Paganism, whenas it is plain, Julian represents it only as an ironical accusation of his master for training him up to such sour manners, and so great an hatred of luxury and effeminacy ; an humour so ungrateful and displeasing to the people of

^k Jul. *Misopog.* p. 352, etc. *Socrat.* l. ii. c. 1. *Sozom.* l. v. c. 2.

^l *Ad Ann.* 337. n. 57.

Antioch. And Libanius^m puts the case past adventure, when he tells us, this eunuch was an excellent guardian of temperance and sobriety, but withal, a bitter and open enemy to the gods. Under the conduct of this Mardonius he attended some other masters, famous professors at that time: Nicocles the Laconian for grammar, and for rhetoric Ecebolius the sophist. But Constantius thought it not safe to continue him in the imperial city, and therefore sent him and his brother Gallus to Macellus, a manor belonging to the crown, at the foot of the mountain Argæus, not far from Cæsarea in Cappadocia, where there was a magnificent palace, pleasant gardens, adorned with baths and fountains, and other noble entertainments: though Julian himself seems to speak of it under a worse character,ⁿ and looked upon their confinement there as a better sort of imprisonment, not being allowed to go thence upon any occasion, and being restrained from all other company but that of their own servants. Six years they remained in this place, during which time they were educated in all arts and exercises, suitable to their age and birth. After which, Gallus being called to court, Julian was suffered to return to Constantinople, where he frequented the schools of the most celebrated professors, and became so famous for his proficiency in learning, his plain garb, and familiar carriage, that he began to be talked of as a person fit to succeed in the empire. To silence the spreading of such rumours,^o Constantius removed him to Nicodemia, and recommended him to the care and superintendency of Eusebius, bishop of that place, who by the mother's side was somewhat of kin to him. The emperor began to suspect his inclinations, and therefore gave particular charge, that he should hold no correspondence with Libanius, a famous orator, but a professed zealous Pagan, who, having been forced to quit Constantinople, had opened a school at Nicomedia. But it is hard to chain up natural inclinations, though the emperor had commanded, and his tutor Mardonius had engaged him by oaths to have nothing to do with Libanius, he could not wholly contain himself. He did not indeed personally converse with him, but a way was found out, whereby his orations and speeches were by a secret messenger conveyed

^m Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 262, 263.

ⁿ Epist. ad Athen. p. 271.

^o Liban. Paneg. ad Jul. vol. ii. p. 175. In Jul. nec. ibid. p. 263. Socrat. l. ii. c. 1. Ann. Marcell. l. xxii. c. 9.

to him every day, (which he read with infinite greediness and delight,) and laid before him as a copy for his imitation. The news of his coming to Nicomedia brought thither Maximus, one of the greatest philosophers of that age, who, under pretence of teaching him philosophy, confirmed him in his love of Paganism, and his spleen against Christianity: and being a man famous for magic, blew him up into a belief of the common report, that he should one day be emperor, which so endeared the man to him, that he took him into his most intimate friendship, and accounted him one of the most valuable blessings of his life.

II. All this he managed with great artifice and subtlety: for knowing how jealous his cousin Constantius was of his affection towards the heathen religion, he professed himself a zealous Christian,^p and to cast the greater blind upon it, he took upon him the tonsure, entered into a monastic life, and suffered himself to be ordained reader of that church, where he read the scriptures in the public congregation. Nay, so far did his disguised zeal extend, that he pretended a passionate honour and reverence for the martyrs, and joined with his brother Gallus to erect a stately oratory to the memory of St. Mamas the Martyr, the one undertaking one part of the work, and the other the other. But God disdained that either himself or his servants should be honoured with such thick and damnable hypocrisy, and accordingly gave testimony from heaven against it. For when that part of the church which Gallus had undertaken went up apace, and prospered, that of Julian could take no effect; in some places the foundations could not be laid, the earth throwing up the stones again; in others, where it was built up to any height, it was immediately shattered, and tumbled to the ground: an accident that administered great variety of discourse, and made many presage what would be the event and issue of things. However, he kept himself upon his guard, though he could not forbear, where he knew his company, to open and disclose the secrets of his mind; and many times in discourse with his brother Gallus,^q he would take upon him very eagerly to defend the cause of suppressed Paganism, wherein though he pretended to manage the cause only by way of disputation, yet the warmth of his temper, and the strength and seriousness of

^p Sozom. l. v. c. 2. Greg. Naz. Orat. iii. in Jul. vol. i. p. 58. Theodor. l. iii. c. 2.

^q Greg. Naz. *ibid.* p. 61.

his arguments, sufficiently shewed he did it *ex animo*, what colour soever he otherwise put upon it. And his practice was accordingly: for whatever he made the world believe, he equally divided his time between study and idolatry, studying all day, and sacrificing at night. And the thing is confessed by one of his dearest friends, than whom none knew him better,^r that it being dangerous for him to appear in his own colours, he seemed to be another man than what he really was, and in public hid himself under another dress; he was not the ass in the lion's skin, but a lion clad with the skin of an ass, (as my author expresses it, scoffingly reflecting upon his Christian profession.) He well understood the best way, *ἔδοκει δὲ τὰ ἀσφαλέστερα*, but he thought good to dissemble, and for the present to steer the safest course. While in truth it almost broke his heart to see the temples desolate,^s the sacrifices forbidden and neglected, the altars and victims taken away, the priests banished, and the revenues of the temples shared among the impure and profane. And, if we may believe Libanius, it was not pleasure or power, grandeur and dominion, made him affect the empire, but only to have an opportunity to restore the worship of the gods. But this, as yet, he kept to himself, waiting a more favourable season wherein to declare himself. This hypocritical garb he wore about him until he was twenty years old, when he put it off by degrees. He left Nicodemia, and retired to some little part of his paternal estate in Asia, for the far greatest part had been confiscated by Constantius. But finding the times growing troublesome and dangerous, by mediation of the empress, who always stood his friend, he got leave to go to Athens, under pretence to perfect his studies, but indeed to enjoy the company of philosophers and Pagan priests, and to consult more securely about future events. And he wanted not enough of that tribe to attend him, nay he frequented the most celebrated oracles in Greece.^t Among the rest he met with a priest, who seemed more peculiarly for his turn. The priest brought him to the temple, and carrying him into the innermost retirements, began to conjure up the demons about him. Julian was affrighted at the sudden and horrid appearance, and in that amazement signed himself with the sign of the cross, whereat the demons immediately vanished. The priest was angry, and severely chid him,

^r Liban. Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 265. ^s Id. *ibid.* p. 266. ^t Theodor. l. iii. c. 3.

and withal told him, that the demons had fled, not because they were afraid of the cross, but because they were angry at his making use of that detestable sign: and so the contest ended, and the priest initiated him in those solemn rites and mysteries.

III. His brother Gallus, who had been some years Cæsar, was now for some treasonable innovations deposed, and put to death. But things going to rack in Gaul and Germany, Constantius was necessitated to think of another partner, and none could be thought of so proper as Julian; the empress Eusebia^u whispering it into Constantius's ears, that he was a young man, of a simple undesigning temper, wholly addicted to his books, and unacquainted with the tricks of ambition, and the intrigues of government: if success attended his enterprises, the glory of them would redound to the emperor; if he miscarried, and was cut off, they should be rid of him, and there would be none left of the royal family to hatch any dangerous designs against the empire. Hereupon he was sent for to court. Before he left Athens,^v with prayers and tears he solemnly recommended himself to the care and protection of Minerva, the tutelar goddess of that place. He pretends he went to court upon this errand with a mighty reluctancy; and when he came to Milan, drew up a letter to the empress to be excused from it, which the gods, he tells us, whom he consulted upon this occasion, did by a vision at night forbid him to send upon pain of death. So he was invested with the title and ornaments of Cæsar, and sent into Gaul, but with a train and retinue altogether strangers to him, and some persons joined with him, and set as so many spies about him, especially Marcellus and Sallustius, without whose privity no persons nor despatches could be brought to him. He had only two intimate confidants along with him: the one his library-keeper, who alone was privy to, and assisted him in the secrets of his religion; the other his physician, who was his familiar friend and companion, whom I suppose to have been Oribasius,^x one of the most eminent physicians of that time. He complains he was sent thither in the midst of winter, with but three hundred and sixty men, and himself in a manner subjected to the officers; being so limited in his commission, that

^u Zosim. l. iii. c. 1.

^v Epist. ad Athen. p. 275. Vid. Liban. Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 268.

^x Vid. Eunap. in vit. Oribas. p. 180.

he could attempt nothing without their concurrence, and they charged to keep as quick an eye upon him as upon the enemy. However, encouraging himself in the presence and assistance of the gods,^y which he promised himself would go along with him, he undertook the expedition. At his arrival at Vienne in Gaul,^z when the whole city ran out to see him, and to give him an honourable reception, an old blind woman being told who it was that was coming, cried out, that he was the person that should repair and restore the temples: and at his entrance into another city, adorned (as the custom was) for the reception of so great a person, a crown that hung between two pillars, dropped full upon his head as he passed under it; looked upon by all as a plain omen of his sudden succeeding in the empire. Five or six years he managed this province with admirable success, all which time he publicly professed himself a Christian,^a and would sometimes, especially upon the feast of the Epiphania, go to church, and offer up his prayers to God. What he did otherwise was by stealth, rising at midnight, and doing his devotions to Mercury.^b And finding now by auguries and divinations that Constantius was not like to live long,^c designs were set on foot with all speed to advance him to the empire: and to hasten the matter, and inflame the army, papers were scattered abroad among the several regiments,^d containing an account of the mischievous designs that were hatching against Julian, and that the emperor intended to withdraw his forces, and leave him exposed to the utmost danger; as indeed Constantius had sent to recall part of the army, which he had occasion to make use of in his wars with Persia. Upon this the army began to mutiny, and refused to march, and coming to the palace, clamorously required him to take the empire upon him; who went presently apart, and made his address to Jupiter, and having received a favourable and benign answer, complied with their importunity; who lifting him up upon a shield, and in want of a better crown, a soldier's wreath being put about his head, they saluted and proclaimed him emperor. He had now thrown the die, and was necessitated to maintain what he had done: but that he

^y Liban. Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 270.

^z Am. Marcell. l. xv. c. 8.

^a Id. l. xxi. c. 2.

^b Id. l. xvi. c. 5.

^c Id. l. xxi. c. 1.

^d Jul. Ep. ad Athen. p. 283. Zosim. l. iii. c. 9. Liban. Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 282.

might proceed with the greater fairness and plausibility, he first despatched an embassy to Constantius, to let him know, that his assuming the imperial power was a force put upon him by others, more than his own voluntary choice; and that if he pleased, he was ready to lay it down again, and return to the station and capacity of Cæsar. Constantius told the ambassador, that if he would secure his head from the vengeance due to so great an insolence, he should not only quit the empire, but resign the Cæsarean dignity, and returning to a private station, refer himself to him. Upon the declaration of which message, Julian openly affirmed, he would much rather commit himself and his fortunes to the gods, than trust his life with Constantius: and in order whereunto, he prepared to march into the eastern parts, giving out, he did it only to satisfy Constantius in the true reason of what had passed. He had long since among his confidants abjured Christianity,^e but his army being most-what made up of Christians, he durst not yet publicly renounce it, and therefore came into the church upon Christmas-day, and did his devotions among the rest. But the more he secured his interest in the soldiery, the more he opened his inclinations to Paganism every day. All along his march, he wrote to most of the great cities,^f accommodating himself to their several humours or interests. That to the senate and people of Athens is still extant, wherein he gives them a large and accurate account of his affairs, what designs he had on foot, what injuries and provocations had been offered him by Constantius, and how the army had forced him, contrary to his inclinations, to take the empire upon him. In his letters to his private friends he dealt more openly; in that to Maximus, he tells him, among other things,^g he would acquaint him with what he knew he would be right glad to hear, that they publicly worshipped and sacrificed to the gods, and that the whole army was of his religion; and that in gratitude to the gods, several hecatombs had been already offered up. And indeed knowing his mind, they began in several places, and particularly in Greece,^h to open their temples, and to beautify and trim them

^e Zonar. Annal. l. xiii. c. 12.

^f Liban. Orat. viii. Panegy. Jul. vol. ii. p. 242. Orat. vii. pro Aristoph. vol. ii. p. 217. Vid. Zosim. l. iii. c. 10. Mamert. Paneg. Jul. p. 53. inter Panegyricos.

^g Epist. xxxviii. p. 415.

^h Liban. Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 288.

up, and to introduce sacrifices; all which he encouraged by his counsel, direction, and example: nay, no sooner did the first news of his assuming the empire arrive at Constantinople,ⁱ but some, forward enough to adore the rising sun, set up his statue in the porch of Constantine's palace in that city; and Demophilus, commander of the soldiers, a bigoted Gentile, erected a porphyry pillar to him, with this inscription, *ΜΕΓΑΣ ΘΕΟΣ ΕΒΗΣ ΠΙΛΑΡΧΩΝ ΙΟΥΛΙΑΝΟΣ*, "The Great and the Religious Julian."

IV. He arrived upon the borders of Illyricum about autumn, when the vintage was over, and yet on a sudden the vines put out afresh, and appeared laden with sour grapes,^k and at the same time certain drops of dew fell upon his and his soldiers' coats, every drop forming itself into the fashion of a cross; both which he made a shift to interpret, the one as an effect of chance, the other as a forerunner of good fortune. In Thrace he heard the news of Constantius's death, who died in Cilicia as he was coming with a great army to encounter him. Thus delivered from his fears, and all rivalry and partnership in the empire, he marched with all speed to Constantinople, which he entered December the 11th, anno 361; and having solemnized the funerals of Constantius, began to let the world see, what religion he intended to espouse. He ordered the temples to be set open,^l those that were decayed to be repaired, and where new ones were wanting, to be built; the privileges and endowments whereof he restored: where any temples had been demolished, and the materials converted to private uses, he fined the persons that had made use of them in a certain sum of money, which he commanded should go towards the building new ones. Altars were every where set up, and the whole train of Gentile rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices, brought again into use. So that, as Libanius tells us, you could go nowhere, but you might behold altars and fires, blood, perfumes, and smoke, and priests attending their sacrifices without fear or interruption; the tops of hills had their oblations and sacrificial feasts, and the imperial palace its temple and sacred furniture. The emperor assumed the title

ⁱ Demonstr. Chronol. Gr. Lat. à Combef. Edit. lib. Orig. rer. Constant. p. 25.

^k Sozom. l. v. c. 1.

^l Liban. Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 291. De vit. sna. ibid. p. 41. Sozom. l. v. c. 3. Greg. Naz. Orat. iii. in Jul. vol. i. p. 70. Am. Marcell. l. xxii. c. 5.

and office of Pontifex Maximus,^m and valued it as equal to that of emperor; he renounced his baptism, and profaned it by polluting himself by their bloody rites, which he opposed to the Christian method of initiation. The first thing he did every morning as soon as out of his bed, was to sacrifice to the gods: he went up and down in person, and was both present and assisted at public sacrifices, and gave encouragement to all that did so, writing to those cities which he knew most devoted to Gentilism, and promising to grant whatsoever they should ask. The warrant of so great an example made the Gentiles unmeasurably insolent in every place, so that not content with leave to celebrate their impious mysteries, they began in their wild cursitations up and down the streets to scoff and deride the Christians,ⁿ and by all imaginable ways of scorn and reproach to expose them and their religion. And when with much greater advantage the Christians paid them home in their own kind, they burst out into a rage, and with blows and wounds fell foul upon them; the emperor in the mean time coniving at what was done. In short, he recalled the laws lately made against Pagan superstition, and confirmed the ancient edicts of his predecessors, that had been made in favour of them. And here perhaps it will be no unacceptable entertainment to the reader, to present him with some of the principal methods Julian made use of for the supporting Paganism, and the suppressing Christianity.

V. And first he set himself to reform Paganism, and the professors of it, from the more gross corruptions, and to introduce many wise and excellent institutions, which he observed among the Christians. The faults and follies of the Gentile world were so conspicuous in themselves, and had been so often exposed by Christians, that they lay open to every eye. And he had no way to recover his religion into any credit, but by retrenching what was so very scandalous and offensive, and planting what was more useful and excellent in the room of it. Earnestly, therefore, and with great importunity, he pressed, that magistrates would take care,^o that men lived justly and according to the laws; and expressed a great piety towards the gods, and humanity towards men, that they would correct men only in order to their reformation, and relieve the necessities they lie

^m Liban. Orat. viii. paneg. Jul. vol. ii. p. 245.

ⁿ Theodor. l. iii. c. 6.

^o Fragm. Epist. p. 288, etc.

under, as the gods do ours; that this was the best and noblest quality, and that which did most recommend us to the favour of the gods, who could not but be pleased with what was most agreeable to their own nature, and would certainly reward it, seeing no man was ever made poor by his charity; and he himself had often found, that the more he had given this way, the more he had received from heaven; that our bounty to the poor ought not to be stinted or limited; all mankind is akin to us, whether we will or no, and we derive our pedigree from one common original, and accordingly ought liberally to communicate to the needs of all, even to the worst of men, and our greatest enemies, (it being the men we are to relieve, and not their vices,) but more especially to the good and virtuous. That being trained up in,^p and acted by these generous principles, every man should strive to be pious towards the gods, kind to men, chaste and regular in his own person, and conversant in all the duties and offices of religion; especially that he should always entertain in his mind sacred and venerable apprehensions of the gods, and with sanctity and honour approach their temples, and adore their statues and images, as if we beheld themselves present before our eyes: for we were not to look upon altars and images as gods, (the gods being incorporeal, and in themselves needing no sacrifices,) but as symbols and representations of the divine presence, and as means and instruments by which we might pay our adoration to them. And because nothing tended more immediately to secure the honour and interest of religion, than a just respect and reverence towards those who attend the ministeries and solemnities of it, he thought it highly reasonable, that the priests should be honoured equally with,^q or rather above the civil magistrates, as being the domestics of heaven, our common intercessors with the gods, and the means of deriving down their blessings upon the world. And so long as they retained this relation, they were to be treated with a reverence due to their function, but if debauched and vicious, they should be deposed, and turned out. Persons invested with this office, were to undertake as sureties for the honour of the gods,^r and should behave themselves so, that their lives might be a copy and pattern of what they were to preach to men: that to this end, they should engage in all acts of worship with a mighty awe and dread, and abstain not only from all vile and wicked

^p Fragm. Epist. p. 292, etc.

^q Ibid. p. 296, etc.

^r Ibid. p. 299, etc.

actions, but words also, yea, from listening to any such discourses, from all scurrilous and abusive jests, all filthy and impure converse; that they should read no idle books, trifling pamphlets, or loose wanton plays, but seriously apply themselves to the study of that divine philosophy, which was most apt to beget a great sense of God upon men's minds, and to learn by heart the hymns that were to be sung in praise of the gods, to whom they were both publicly and privately to put up their supplications at least thrice a day, however, that nothing less than morning and evening should serve the turn; that every priest in the course of his waiting should entirely attend upon it, and never depart out of the temple, but give himself up to philosophic thoughts, and a careful discharge of the duties of that place; and when his time expired, and he was to return home, converse with none but the best and most select company, seldom go into the forum, or approach the houses of great men, unless in cases that concerned his office, and when he might be helpful to the poor and indigent; to be habited when he went abroad in a plain decent garb, and different from what he wears in his ministration in the temple; that in no case they should frequent the theatres, or exhibit any obscene sports or shows in their own houses, which he wished were reformed, or quite taken away; but since there was little hopes of that, that the priests at least should abstain from all such theatrical impurities, and leave them to the people, and be so careful of their converse, as not to be seen in the company and familiarity of a charioteer, or any player or dancer belonging to the theatre. Lastly, that in every city they ought to be chosen out of the best, the most religious and charitable persons, without any consideration whether they be rich or poor, external circumstances not being to be regarded in this matter. It was enough if the person was endued with piety to God and humanity to men. An evidence of the first whereof it would be, if he trained up his domestics and relatives in the same paths of piety: of the latter, if out of that little which he has, he freely distributes to the indigent, and does good to as many as he can. And the neglect of this, he tells them, was that which gave opportunity to the wicked Galileans by their singular humanity and charity, to strengthen and establish their pernicious party, and pervert honest-minded Gentiles to their impiety.

VI. This is the sum of that excellent discourse, (so much of

it as is now extant,) wherein he lays down rules for reforming Paganism; which, indeed, he sought to bring as near as might be to those admirable methods and forms of discipline, by which he saw Christianity had mainly prevailed in the world. In imitation whereof,^s he designed and endeavoured to introduce schools for the education of youth in every city, churches and altars of different degrees and privileges, lectures both of moral and speculative theology, stated times and forms of alternate prayer, the use of anathematism and penance, monasteries for devout and philosophic persons of either sex, alms-houses and hospitals for the poor and cripple, and the reception of strangers; and what he most admired, the commendatory ecclesiastic epistles, or letters testimonial, from the bishop or governor of the church, whereby persons travelling from one country to another were, upon the producing these letters, sure to meet, wherever they came, with a very kind and ready entertainment. All which he heartily recommends in his letter to Arsacius,^t which, because so express to the case in hand, we shall here insert.

“ To Arsacius, chief-priest of Galatia.

“ That the Gentile religion does not as yet go on according to our desire and expectation, is the fault of those that do profess it; for what has been done in reference to the gods, is splendid and magnificent, and great beyond either our desires or hopes. For (with reverence to the justice of the Divine Providence, be it spoken) to bring about such and so great a change in so short a time, was more than any man a little while since durst so much as wish for. What then? Shall we acquiesce here, and think these things enough, and not rather cast our eyes upon those things that have advanced the impious religion of the Christians? I mean, their kindness and compassion to strangers, their diligent care in burying the dead, and that feigned seriousness and gravity that appears in their whole carriage; all which, I am of opinion, we ought really to put in practice. Nor is it enough that you alone are thus qualified, but all the priests in Galatia ought to be altogether such: and to that purpose, either shame or persuade them into it, or remove them from their sacerdotal function; unless, together with their

^s Greg. Naz. Orat. iii. in Jul. vol. i. p. 101. Sozom. l. v. c. 16.

^t Jul. Epist. xlix. p. 429. et ap. Sozom. l. v. c. 16.

wives, children, and servants, they studiously apply themselves to the worship of the gods, not suffering their servants, children, or wives to be Galileans, who are despisers of the gods, and prefer impiety before religion. Moreover, warn every priest that he go not to the theatre, nor sit drinking in taverns, nor apply himself to any mean sordid trade. Those that comply, give them honour and respect; those that continue obstinate, turn them out. Appoint several hospitals for poor travellers in every city, that indigent strangers, not of ours only, but of any other way, may enjoy the benefit of our grace and charity. For the defraying which expenses, I have now made provision; for I have ordered thirty thousand *modii* (or bushels) of wheat to be yearly distributed throughout Galatia, and sixty thousand quarts of wine; a fifth part whereof, I will have allowed to the poor officers that wait upon the priests; the remainder you shall distribute among the poor and strangers: for it were a great shame, that when none of the Jews go a begging, and when the wretched Galileans relieve not only their own, but ours too, that our poor only should be deserted by us, and left naked and helpless. Wherefore admonish and instruct the Gentiles, that they contribute liberally to these services, and that every village dedicate their first-fruits to the gods. Accustom them to this kind of benevolence, and shew them that this has of old been practised among us. For so Homer brings in Eumæus speaking thus:

‘Ξεῖν’ οὐ μοι θέμις ἔστω, οὐτ’ εἰ κακίων σέθεν ἔλθοι,
 Ξεῖνον ἀτιμῆσαι· πρὸς γὰρ Διὸς εἰσὶν ἅπαντες
 Ξεῖνοί τε πτωχοῖτε· δόσις δ’ ὀλίγη τε φίλη τέ.’

‘Welcome, kind stranger, ’tis not just with me
 Strangers to slight, though meaner far than thee:
 Strangers and beggars are alike from Jove;
 Mean is thy treatment, yet a feast of love.’

“ Let us not then suffer others, who emulate our pious usages, to carry away the glory from us, while by our carelessness and negligence we disgrace ourselves, and seem rather to betray and forfeit our piety to the gods. If I hear you shall bring these things about, I shall rejoice exceedingly. Go but seldom to the governor’s houses, but write often to them. When they make their entrance into any city, let no priest go out to meet them; if they come to the temples, let him only meet them in

the porch ; and when they enter in, let no officer go before them, but as many as will may follow after, for no sooner does any one set his foot over the threshold of that place, but he becomes a private man, equal with the rest. For yourself, you know, are sole commander there, according to divine constitutions. Such only as are obedient, are the true worshippers of God, they that stand upon pomp and grandeur, are proud and vain-glorious. For my part, I am ready to afford relief to them of Pessinus, provided they atone and propitiate the mother of the gods ; but if they shall slight her, they shall not only be not blameless, but, which I am loath to tell them, incur our heavy indignation.

*‘Οὐ γὰρ μοι θέμις ἐστὶ κομίζεμεν, ἢ ἐλεαίρειν
‘Ανδρας, οἳ καὶ θεοῖσιν ἀπέχθων’ ἀθανάτοισιν.’*

‘Tis impious to be kind to them,
Who do the immortal gods contemn.’

“Persuade them therefore, if they desire I should take any care of them, universally to make their public supplications to the mother of the gods.”

By this designed reformation, and which, had he lived, he would no doubt in a great measure have accomplished, he hoped to render his religion so amiable in the eyes of Christians, as easily to bring them over to it, at least he should throw out of the way those popular objections that were commonly made against it.

VII. Secondly, he took all occasions of exposing Christians, and making them and their religion appear ridiculous to the world. He was a man of great wit, and his wit particularly set to a sharp and sarcastic edge, and he principally turned it this way. He read the scriptures for no other end but to cavil or confute them ; to pick out, as he thought, the most obnoxious passages, which he first dressed up according to his own humour, and then derided them, and set them up for others to laugh at. If he met with a seeming contradiction, he made it real ; if with an hyperbolical expression, he improved it into blasphemy, and would run it down as inconsistent with the dictates of infinite wisdom. He scorned the simplicity of the apostles and prophets, whom he represented as a pack of ignorant and illiterate fellows, that had no breeding and education, and understood little beyond the shop, or a trade. He

carped at them in almost every epistle, and in his Persian expedition wrote seven whole books in confutation of Christianity, which were afterwards solidly and fully answered by St. Cyril of Alexandria. When he spake at any time of our Saviour, he would give him no other title than the Son of Mary, or the Galilean; and by a particular law commanded,^u that the followers of our Lord should not be called Christians, but Galileans, foolishly thinking to render them odious to the world by clapping an infamous name upon them. The imperial standard of the cross,^x which his uncle had made with so pious an intention, and with such exquisite artifice, he took down, and in the room of it put up another, in all his pictures and statues, representing Jupiter near him as coming down from heaven, and delivering him a crown and the purple, the two *insignia* of the empire; sometimes he had Mars and Mercury looking upon him, and seeming to give testimony, one to his valour, the other to his eloquence. And his great officers walked apace after his example. His uncle Julian,^y who was governor of the East, entering into a church of the Christians at Antioch, pissed against the holy table, and when Euzoius reproved him for it, he took him a box on the ear. And his colleague Felix, keeper of the imperial treasures, and who, in compliance with the emperor, had renounced his Christianity, taking up the noble and magnificent communion plate, which the piety of the former emperors had bestowed upon the church, "See (said he in a scorn) in what brave cups and vessels the Son of Mary is served." But behold the justice of the Divine Providence, that immediately overtook these blasphemous miscreants. Julian was seized with a miserable distemper, his bowels rotted within him, and his very excrements flowed out of his profane mouth; and after having lain forty days together under the most inconceivable torments of the bowels, he breathed out his miserable soul; though before his death, his lady, a pious and virtuous Christian, had brought him to so great a sense of his sin, that he petitioned the emperor in behalf of the Christians. Felix had a quicker execution, for one of the master-veins breaking, all the blood in his body emptied itself out at his mouth, to the horror and amazement of all that saw it, and in less than a day's

^u Greg. Naz. Orat. iii. in Jul. vol. i. p. 81.

^x Id. *ibid.* p. 75. Sozom. l. v. c. 16.

^y Theodor. l. iii. c. 12, 13. Philost. l. vii. c. 10.

time he vomited up his blood and his soul together. But to return to the emperor, who caught at all advantages of deriding whatever had any relation to Christianity; and because he knew how just a reverence the Christians paid to the memory of the great Constantine for being the first open patron of Christianity, he traduced him at every turn, and in the conclusion of his Cæsars represents him as a person notoriously guilty of the most scandalous effeminacy and debauchery, with other vices as falsely as spitefully charged upon him; and indeed hooks in all occasions to bespatter and reproach him. And in the same place he proclaims the Christian religion to be little else but a receptacle and sanctuary for rogues and villains, where the vilest of men might shelter themselves, and though guilty of the most enormous crimes, might upon a little trifling penance be, *toties quoties*, in a moment made pure and clean. This he thought must needs render it cheap and ridiculous to all wise and considering men, and if he did not laugh Christians out of their religion, he should however confirm the Gentiles in his own.

VIII. Thirdly, he sought by all ways to bring Christians low, and to weaken and destroy their power and interest: to this end, first, he banished them out of all places of honour and authority,² reducing them to this dilemma, either to do sacrifice, or to quit their employment, and become incapable of all civil offices. If they complied with the first, he had his ends, and they fell under the reproachful character of persons who loved their places better than their consciences, and preferred an empty honour before their religion; if they laid them down, he was rid of so many potent and dangerous enemies, who might head a party to oppose his designs, or at least encourage the common sort of Christians to stand to their religion with a firmer constancy and resolution. Thus, among others, Valentinian, who was afterwards emperor, generously threw up his place of colonel of one part of the guards of the palace, and submitted to the sentence of banishment, rather than he would come under the least shadow of an idolatrous compliance, whereof more in its proper place. And not content with this, where any had been employed in the reigns of the preceding emperors, in demolishing Pagan altars, pulling down temples, taking away their orna-

² Sozom. l. v. c. 18. Chrysost. Hom. in Juvent. et Max. s. l. vol. ii. p. 579.

ments, or the like, he not only stripped them of their honours and privileges, but suffered them to be indicted, condemned, and executed, where a bare accusation was many times proof enough. Secondly, he exacted unreasonable sums of money from them on all occasions, that being impoverished, they might either lie under a strong temptation to apostacy, or be secured from attempting any thing against the civil state. Hence the fines, penalties, and confiscations that filled his reign; any pretence serving to start a title to their estates. If a man was but suspected to have enriched himself by any revenues formerly belonging to heathen temples, he was presently brought into the exchequer, and right or wrong, forced to refund: if guilty of the least mutiny or riot, their purses were sure to smart for it. Thus, when the Arians at Edessa had fallen foul upon the Valentinian heretics,^a he presently seized the treasures of that church, which he bestowed upon his soldiers; and the lands, which he appropriated to his own use; jeering them into the bargain, that he did but herein deal with them according to the admirable law of their own religion, ease them of their burden, that they might go so much the lighter unto the kingdom of heaven; and that being made poor, they might become wise, and not fall short of that heavenly kingdom they so greedily expected. But nothing served him to better purpose than this war against Persia, under pretence whereof he amassed infinite treasures,^b imposing a heavy pecuniary mulct upon the heads of all those that refused to offer sacrifice to the gods. The edict was executed with merciless severity, yea, even upon those who had nothing to pay: nay, the commanders and officers stretched it beyond its natural intention, extorting greater sums than the edict had imposed, beating and abusing them that refused to pay. And when the Christians complained to him of the oppressions and injuries which in this case the governors of provinces put upon them, all the redress they could get, was a sarcasm tart enough, "Your Christ (said he) has given you a law, that when you suffer unjustly, you should bear it resolutely; and when oppressed and injured, should not answer again." Thirdly, he studied to set them a clashing and quarrelling with one another, that he might do his work with their hands. The politic prince remembered the old maxim, "Divide, and govern;"

^a Jul. Epist. xliii. ad Hecebolium. p. 424.

^b Niceph. l. x. c. 24.

it was but setting them together by the ears, and they would ruin themselves. He was not ignorant what powerful factions there were among them, what implacable feuds and animosities had been exercised between several parties in the times of his predecessors; he knew these bitter contentions were not forgotten, and that they would return to them with fresh, and perhaps more eager appetites. To which end he no sooner came to the crown, but he recalled the banished bishops, whom he gave leave to return to their sees,^c possessed by those, who he knew would not easily part with them. And though to gain himself the reputation of a wise and merciful prince, he sent for the bishops and their people to court, and pressed them to concord, and that every one would peaceably enjoy the freedom of his own way, yet the design at the bottom was plainly this, that he might set them a wrangling more effectually, and that the liberty he gave them might widen and increase their dissensions, that so they might be incapable of confederating into any dangerous and formidable combinations, as is confessed by his own historian:^d an artifice he was sure would take effect, having by experience found (says mine author, with reproach enough, if it was true) that no kind of wild beasts were so outrageous to mankind, as some Christians were to one another. At the same time, and for the same purpose, he gave the like indulgence to all sorts of heretics, and wrote particularly to Aetius, the patron and ring-leader of the Eunomian sect,^e whom he not only permitted to return home, but sent for to court at his own charge; who (that I may note this by the way) was no sooner returned, but his party gathered about him,^f and ordained him bishop; and Eudoxius, bishop of Constantinople, wrote in his behalf to Enzoius bishop of Antioch, who getting together a convention of nine bishops, synodically cancelled all the acts that had been made against Aetius, particularly those that had passed in the late council at Constantinople. Besides this favour to Aetius, at Cyzicum the emperor commanded Eleusius, bishop of that place, to rebuild the church of the Novatians,^g which he had formerly pulled down, at his own charge, placing a heavy fine upon his head, if he did not within two months set upon it. He published likewise an edict in favour of the Donatists, a sect of men pecu-

^c Sozom. l. v. c. 5. Philost. l. vii. c. 4.

^d Am. Marcell. l. xxii. c. 5.

^e Epist. xxxi. p. 404.

^f Philost. l. vii. c. 5, 6.

^g Socrat. l. iii. c. 11.

liarily disposed to quarrels and contentions, whom he restored to their liberties, revenues, and the possession of their churches.^b What fatal and mischievous effects this licentious toleration produced in the Christian world, they who have read the church history of that time, need not be told.

IX. Fourthly, though he himself abstained from open persecution, yet he connived at those that did persecute the Christians. He passionately affected the character of justice and clemency, and knew no readier way to do it, than by treating his declared adversaries with some kind of gentleness and lenity. Hence he glories once and again,ⁱ how kind he had been to the Galileans, beyond the rate of that usage they had met with in the time of his predecessors; instead of banishment, they had been sent for home; instead of a prison, they enjoyed liberty; instead of being plundered, their confiscated goods had been by edict restored to them; that he had commanded none of them to be beaten, abused, or put to death without law, and beyond the rules of justice. And notwithstanding their madness and folly had almost ruined all, yet the worst he had done them was, that in his esteem and choice of persons, he had preferred pious and good men before them: and one of his greatest advocates triumphs in this,^k that he did not prosecute the untrue religion (meaning the Christian) with fire and sword, nor drive men over by cruelty and torment; which yet must be understood of his general carriage, and what he did above-board, and of negative rather than positive favours. Besides, he considered, that all the methods of rage and fierceness would never compass or attain his ends; he might put the world into a flame and a combustion, but he could never drive the Christians out of it, nor force them to be of his mind; their religion might be shaken, but it would take deeper root. He had observed the unhappy miscarriages of his Pagan predecessors,^l who by sanguinary laws, and rigorous proceedings, had been so far from extinguishing Christianity, that they had spread it through the world; and that the church's field was never more fruitful, than when watered with the blood

^b Vid. Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. v. l. 38. et Gothofr. Comm.

ⁱ Epist. vii. ad Artab. p. 376. et Ep. lii. ad Bostren. p. 435, 436.

^k Liban. Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 290.

^l Chrysost. Hom. in Juvent. et Max. s. l. vol. ii. p. 579. Sozom. l. v. c. 4. Greg. Naz. Orat. iii. in Jul. vol. i. p. 72.

of martyrs, who grew up thicker the faster they were mowed down. Great and generous minds are not easily daunted with opposition, but grow up thereby into a more manly courage and resolution. In the midst of all their spite and cruelty, Christians could court the stake and the flames, the sword and the rack, and their persecutors sometimes had enough to do to keep them from pressing on to an execution, and people could not but inquire into, admire, and embrace that religion, which supported and invigorated the minds of its professors, and made them triumph in the midst of those sufferings, which were beyond all the powers of human nature to bear up under. The same spirit he saw continued still, and Christians were as ready as their enemies, and to use his own expression, "Give them but occasion, and they will crowd as fast to martyrdom, as bees swarm to their hives." But he would not gratify them in that, though it had been so dearly to their cost; he envied them the honour of martyrdom, a thing he found they so eagerly desired, and valued beyond all the conveniencies of life, or the enjoyments and advantages of this world. And if any died in defence of their religion, he commanded they should not be accounted martyrs, and that they should be thought to die for any crimes, rather than upon the account of religion. For these reasons he laid aside all thoughts of a public and general persecution, which would have made him and his party so much the more odious, and them more great and venerable. But though no public warrants were issued out, he left his commanders and governors to use their discretion, especially in those places that were far from court, who were not backward to improve their authority and power. They well understood their master's mind, and from one instance, among others, might take measures from all the rest, when upon occasion of a complaint made to him of a miserable outrage the Gentiles had committed upon the Christians at Cæsarea,^m he replied, "What great matter is it, if one Gentile hand despatch ten Galileans." This made it a hot season, notwithstanding the general indulgence among the poor provincials, especially in some parts, where the governors proceeded with all the cruelty which men's bodies or estates were capable of, and with all manner of violence against their churches, and the rites of their religion. A particular account whereof I could

^m Greg. Naz. Orat. iii. in Jul. vol. i. p. 92.

easily give, but that it would require a martyrology, rather than an incidental mention in an introduction. Some few of the most considerable Theodoret has brought together,ⁿ where the reader may find them. Nay, not content to abuse the living, their rage extended to the dead. Among others, they dug up the bones of the prophet Elisha,^o and John the Baptist, (both buried at Samaria,) which having mixed with the bones of beasts, they burnt to ashes, and then scattered the ashes before the wind.

X. Fifthly, he endeavoured especially to discourage and weary out their bishops and clergy. This had been an old trick, and vigorously attempted in all ages by the great enemy of mankind; it was but for the wolf to persuade the flock they had no need of a shepherd, and his work was done. The clergy have always been the great eye-sore to men of pernicious and atheistical principles, whose desperate designs they have strenuously opposed and countermined, and could never be brought to be content, that the world should be over-run with atheism and impiety, and the people moulded into any shape, and thereby betray the souls committed to their charge. This, whatever may be pretended, is the true source and original of all that spite and malice they are encountered with by men of bad minds, and of all those hard names and characters of reproach to this day fixed upon them by an ungrateful and degenerate world. Julian pretended, the reason of his hard usage of them,^p was, lest they should stir up the people to sedition; but in truth it was to be rid of them, that by their absence the people might be destitute of all means of instruction and information, and the divine efficacy and obligation of the sacraments, and be by degrees brought into ignorance of, or an unconcernedness for their own religion, and then they were fit to receive any impression; take but away the candle, and darkness will ensue; if the shepherd be smitten, the sheep will be scattered.^q To compass this more effectually, he first seized their incomes, and took away their allowances of corn; next, he abrogated their immunities; and whereas by the favour of former princes they had been exempt from being of the

ⁿ Lib. iii. c. 7. vid. c. 16, 17, 18, 19.

^o Philost. l. vii. c. 4. Niceph. l. x. c. 13. Rufin. l. ii. c. 28.

^p Sozom. l. v. c. 15. Jul. Epist. lii. ad Bostren. p. 437.

^q Sozom. l. v. c. 5. Philost. l. vii. c. 4. vid. Cod. Theodos. lib. xii. Tit. i. l. 50. lib. xiii. Tit. i. l. 4.

curiales, he repealed these laws, and made them liable to the burdens and offices of the civil courts, especially where any of them had been ordained out of that body: and when this would not do, he endeavoured to remove and drive them away by fraud or force. At Antioch the churches were shut up, the plate and treasures seized into the exchequer, and the clergy forced to fly. So it was at Cyzicum, where there was not the least shadow of sedition. At Bostra he threatened Titus the bishop,^r that if any mutiny happened, he would lay all the blame upon him and his clergy; and when the bishop, to clear himself, sent his apology to court, to assure him, that though the Christians were the far greater number, yet they lived peaceably under his conduct, the emperor wrote back to the city, making a spiteful and disingenuous representation of the bishop's letter, as if it had contained nothing but malicious and scurrilous reflections upon them, exciting the commonalty to expel him as a common enemy and calumniator out of the city. And in some places proceeded to that extremity, as to cast them into prison,^s and expose them to great pains and tortures.

XI. Sixthly, he gave all manner of assistance and encouragement to the Jews, merely in spite and opposition to the Christians. And herein we have a notorious instance how far malice will stoop to serve its ends. Julian hated the Jews almost equally with the Christians, and yet when he found they were likely to be proper instruments to his purpose, he spake tenderly of them, pitied their miserable and afflicted state, desired their prayers in his Persian wars, released the tribute put upon them, and pressed them to the rebuilding their temple, re-edifying their altar, and restoring their sacrifices, and the solemnities of their worship. In order whereunto he sent them a commission, allowed the charges of the work out of his own exchequer, and appointed officers to superintend it, and that the governor of the province should aid and assist them in it. Two things especially he propounded to himself in this: First, that by thus obliging the Jews, he should be the better able to bring them over to his own religion; or however that went, should thrust an incurable thorn into the sides of Christians. He was not to be told what an inveterate and implacable enmity the Jews bear to Christians, and that being now backed with the royal authority, they would

^r Sozom. l. v. c. 15. et Jul. Epist. lii. p. 437.

^s Sozom. l. v. c. 5.

not only reproach and bespatter, but oppress and trample upon them, and pursue them with the utmost violence of a fierce and ungovernable zeal. Secondly, he hoped, by restoring the temple and legal worship, to evidence to the world, that our Saviour was an impostor and false prophet, who had so expressly foretold the final and irrevocable dissolution of that church and state. So the work was carried on with all possible briskness and activity, and nothing was thought of but feasts and triumphs, when heaven on a sudden baffled the whole enterprise, and many illustrious and miraculous appearances of the divine vengeance forced the workmen to sit down, and give over in despair; and what the emperor designed as a way to suppress, became a means to advance Christianity, no inconsiderable number being hereby brought over to the Christian faith: of all which particulars, an account is given at large in the Life of St. Cyril of Jerusalem.

XII. Seventhly, he endeavoured to suppress and extinguish all human learning amongst the Christians, well knowing how naturally ignorance opens the way to barbarism and impiety. To bring this about, he published a law, that no professor of any art or science should set up in any place,⁴ until by long exercise he was fitted for it; and, after mature deliberation, had gained the approbation and decree of the court of that city, with the consent of the *Optimates*: and that this decree should be sent first to him for his allowance. Next he forbade christian schoolmasters to teach any Gentile learning,⁵ to instruct and educate children in their arts, or to read their books to them; which his own historian more than once censures as a churlish and cruel edict,⁶ worthy to be covered with eternal silence. By this means he designed to let in rudeness and ignorance among the Christians, and thereby dispose them to any impressions he might make upon them, to prevent the youths being perverted by going to the Christian schools, to render them of his own party more able to dispute with and baffle Christians; at least, that Christians might be less able to encounter them, and to discern their sophistical reasonings, their false and fallacious insinuations; "Lest otherwise (said he⁷) we be shot through with our own arrows,

⁴ Cod. Theodos. lib. xiii. Tit. iii. l. 5.

⁵ Greg. Naz. Orat. iii. in Jul. vol. i. p. 51. Sozom. l. v. c. 13. Theodor. l. iii. c. 3.

⁶ Am. Marcell. l. xxii. c. 10. et l. xxv. c. 4.

⁷ Ap. Theodor. l. iii. c. 3. Socrat. l. iii. c. 12.

and they, being furnished with our armour, make war upon us with our own weapons." He challenged the learning and writings of the Gentiles as their own proper goods,^x who alone embraced the religion, and worshipped the gods, which they treated of; that these were unnecessary to Christians, who were trained up to an illiterate clownishness, and the sum of whose doctrine lay in τὸ πιστεῦσον, "Believe," and it is enough; and that by this prohibition he did but retrieve stolen goods, and restore them to their right owners. But besides the folly of the attempt itself, seeing, though he might hinder them from speaking elegantly and genteelly, he could not hinder them from speaking truth, which was mighty, and would prevail and make its way, notwithstanding all their plots and devices to the contrary; besides this, it did but whet on Nazianzen and the two Apollinaries, who, by their acute poems and elegant orations, abundantly supplied the defect of all heathen authors, as we have elsewhere observed.

XIII. Eighthly, above all men he highly honoured, embraced, and rewarded philosophers, and those who were likely most vigorously to oppose and refute Christianity. It grieved him to see the Christian faith so largely spread, so firmly rooted, and so many excellent books written, either in defence, or explication of it; and he sticks not to tell us,^y he heartily wished all writings that concerned the doctrine of the wicked Galileans, were quite banished out of the world. But because there were no hopes of that, he encouraged all the sophists, philosophers, and orators, that he could meet with, to bend their wits and studies this way; whom he resettled in their own countries and possessions, allowed them pensions, and peculiar privileges, and indeed whatever they could reasonably desire or expect from him. This filled all schools and colleges, all courts and corners, with lectures, invectives, and declamations against Christians. This made the philosophising trade go on apace, every one desiring to comply with the emperor's humour, though a great part of them had little more of the philosopher in them, besides the habit and the cloak.^z This brought so many of them to court, that the palace seemed a kind of academy, where all places were crowded with philosophers, *aruspices*, and magicians; Jamblicus, Libanius, Maximus, Ecebolius, Oribasius, and great numbers

^x Greg. Naz. Orat. iii. in Jul. vol. i. p. 97.

^y Epist. ix. ad Ecdic. p. 378.

^z Vid. Socrat. l. iii. c. 1.

more, whom he took into his bosom, and made privy to his greatest intrigues, steered affairs by their councils, and in their company spent his leisure-hours; and indeed was impatient at any time when they were wanting. And these being the men that were generally intrusted with the education of youth, and who governed and directed the minds and consciences of the people, he was sure of so many sworn enemies to Christianity, who would not fail to lay out all their talents and abilities that way. And the truth is, if wit, or learning, or eloquence, could have done it, he had certainly driven it out of the world. But “the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and his weakness stronger than men,” who baffled all their tricks of artifice and subtlety, and “made foolish the wisdom of this world.”

XIV. Ninthly, he tried by several secret and subtle artifices to ensnare unwary Christians into compliance with Pagan superstitions, that having once drawn them in, he might either wholly bring them over, or, by the reflection upon what they had done, disquiet their consciences, as the very report of it might undermine their reputations. Of this, a few instances shall suffice. He used to place the images of the heathen gods^a next to, or behind his own statues, that when the people came, according to custom, to do obeisance to the one, they might do it also to the other: those that did it, he persuaded to venture a little farther; those that discovered the cheat, and refused, he charged with treason, and proceeded against them, as delinquents against the laws and customs of the empire. When the soldiers came at the solemn times, to receive their donative, the ancient usage was, at the same time to throw a piece of frankincense into the fire, in honour of the gods, which though the Christians generally detested, yet some few, surprized thereinto, by an inveterate custom, did it. But, being minded afterwards of what they had done, such an horror seized upon their consciences, that they run up and down like madmen, went to the emperor, and threw back their donatives, publicly professing themselves Christians, and desiring they might die to give testimony to their religion. At other times, he would defile the springs and fountains with Gentile sacrifices,^b and sprinkle all the flesh meat, or whatsoever sort of food was brought to market,

^a Sozom. l. v. c. 17. p. 621. Greg. Naz. Orat. iii. in Jul. vol. i. p. 74 et 83.

^b Theodor. l. iii. c. 15. Chrysost. Hom. in Juvent. et Max. s. 2. vol. ii. p. 530, etc.

with hallowed water, offered to their gods, that so they could neither eat nor drink, but they must seem at least to enter into a partnership with idolatry. The Christians resented it with a just indignation, though they knew withal, St. Paul had long since determined this case. Upon this occasion, Juveninus and Maximus, two officers in the imperial guards, expressed a vehement dislike of the emperor's action, with a tart reflection upon his apostacy. For which being summoned and examined, they plainly told him, "Sir, we have been educated in the true religion, and having submitted to those excellent laws established by Constantine and his children, cannot but now bewail the abominations which we see you cast about in every place, while you pollute both meat and drink with impure filthy sacrifices. These are the things we lament and complain of, both at home, and now again in your presence, and mourn under, as the great blemish of your reign." Julian, notwithstanding all his gravity and philosophical attainments, was so nettled at this answer, that he could not pass it over, but commanded them to be first miserably tortured, and then put to death. Though he would not have it thought that they suffered upon the account of religion, but only for their bold and petulant carriage to himself.

XV. Having thus viewed the methods by which Julian sought to extirpate Christianity, we proceed to the historical remainder of his reign. Seven or eight (Zosinus by mistake, makes it ten) months he stayed at Constantinople; when, having settled affairs there, he conceived it high time to take care of the eastern borders of the empire: in order whereunto he crossed the Hellespont, and passing through Bithynia, came to Pessinus,^c a city of Galatia, situate in the confines of the greater Phrygia, where stood a very ancient temple dedicated to Rhea or Ceres, the mother of all heathen deities, the worship whereof he restored, and created Callixenes priest; and having paid his devotions to the goddess, published an elegant oration^d (the work but of one night) in honour of the mother of the gods; as about the same time, at another night, he drew up a smart invective, against an illiterate philosopher, who pretending himself a Cynic, and of Diogenes's tribe, did yet condemn the strict and severe principles of that institution, by a loose and

^c Liban. Orat. ix. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 254.

^d Id. Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 300.

vicious life. Thence he passed the Pylæ, and through Cilicia, and came to Antioch, where he arrived about the latter end of July, anno 362. He found the city almost wholly Christian, and the Pagan rites generally neglected. He went into the famous temple of Apollo in the Daphne,^e on its great annual festival, where, instead of great crowds and magnificent oblations, which he expected, he found neither the one nor the other; whereat he wondered, thinking the people stayed without, and waited his leave to come in: but the priest told him, the city had provided no manner of sacrifices, and that he had only there one poor goose, which he had brought from home, to make an offering to the god. The emperor was highly offended, and expostulated sharply with the senate, that in such a city, there should be found so much irreverence to the gods, beyond what was to be met with in the most barbarous corner of the empire; and that being so rich, they should not afford one little bird for sacrifice, when every ward might have brought an ox, much more the whole city joined together; that they spared no cost in their private feasts and entertainments, while they gave not a penny to any public or private sacrifice, but suffered their wives to enrich the Galileans, and throw away their estates upon their poor; there was none of them but would celebrate their own birth days, with all imaginable pomp and plenty, when they would not bestow a little oil for the lamps, not a piece of frankincense, nor the smallest oblation, upon the solemnities of the gods. He intended, it seems, to consult this oracle about the success of his affairs,^f but, by its own confession, found it was tongue-tied in those matters, by Babylas's grave that was near it, and who had sometime been bishop of that place. He caused the Christians therefore to remove his bones, which they did in a triumphant manner; and soon after, viz. October 22, that famous temple was burnt to the ground: and though it was highly probable it was fired by lightning, yet must it be charged upon the Christians, many of whom were put to the rack, and the great church at Antioch commanded to be shut up. But the story hereof, we have more fully related in another place. I shall here only add, that St. Babylas's bones being translated from the Daphne, the oracle there, and in other

^e Jul. Misopog. p. 361, 362.

^f Socrat. l. iii. c. 13. Sozom. l. v. c. 19, 20. Am. Marcell. l. xxii. c. 13.

places,^g recovered its speech, and gave forth its answers; God permitting the Gentiles to be ensnared in their own errors, and what they accounted the honour of their religion, through the falseness and vanity of their predictions, turned to their disgrace: a great instance whereof happened about this time. The emperor's uncle lay sick of a most miserable and incurable distemper; all the oracles were consulted about his life, which all, with one mouth, pronounced that he should recover. The answers were taken and brought in writing, and while they were reading them to him, that very minute he died.

XVI. But that which further raised Julian's spleen against the men of Antioch was this: the mighty train he had brought along with him was likely enough to cause a scarcity; and he, out of a vain affectation of popularity, cried down the price of all vendible commodities below what they could be afforded at.^h Hereupon the traders withdrew, and brought nothing to market, and so a real famine ensued. This put the people into a mutiny, who charged the fault upon the emperor; and, according to the humour of that place, pelted him with satirical reflections, especially playing upon his long, rough, and ill-shaped beard; for which they called him a goat, and usually said, it was good for nothing but to be shaved off, and to make ropes of it. And whereas out of his immoderate vein of superstition, he did not only offer up daily sacrifices, but had caused a bull standing before the altar to be stamped upon the reverse of his coins, it signified (they said) how much he had tossed and overturned the world. Julian was sufficiently sensible of the affront, and at first vowed revenge, and that he would leave their city, and remove to Tarsus. But he soon altered his resolution, and chose rather to repay them in their own coin, telling them he would by no means have his beard made into ropes,ⁱ lest the roughness of it should offend their tender and delicate hands, reflecting upon their nice and effeminate manners. And indeed he abundantly revenged himself upon them by a tart satire, which he called *Misopogon*, or the *Beard-hater*; wherein besides some historical passages of note and value, he does very sarcastically, and in an

^g Philost. l. vii. c. 12.

^h Soerat. l. iii. c. 17. Sozom. l. v. c. 19. Am. Mareell. l. xxii. c. 14. Zosim. l. iii. c. 11. Vid. Liban. de vit. sua, vol. ii. p. 42. Orat. x. in Jul. nec. p. 306.

ⁱ Zonar. Annal. l. xiii. c. 12.

ironical way, expose the vices of that people, especially charging them with luxury and intemperance, softness and effeminacy; that they did little but spend their time in sports, and the entertainments of the theatre, with apostacy from the religion of their ancestors, and an over-fond reverence for Chi and Kappa, that is, Christ and Constantine; and with an ill-ordered magistracy, that neglected the public weal, and complied with the rich and covetous, to the oppression of the common people. Winter being over, he departed with his army from Antioch the first of March; and at his going out, to let them understand how much he resented the affronts they had put upon him, told them, by a fatal prognostication, that he would never see them more: and the story is commonly known,^k that when Julian marched out with a great pomp and train, and had spoken big words of what he would do to the Christians at his return, Libanius, to add the greater scorn and reproach to them, asked a Christian school-man of his acquaintance at Antioch, "what the carpenter's son was now doing?" meaning our ever blessed Saviour: the man replied, with tartness enough, "he is making a coffin for your master Julian." But to proceed: the emperor, marching on, passed by Edessa, which he would not enter, because so populously inhabited by Christians, (though Zozimus says the people of that place came generally out to meet him, presented him with a crown, and courteously invited him into the city, which he accepted of and went accordingly,) and on the 18th of April came to Carræ, a city of Mesopotamia, where he entered into a Pagan temple,^l and performed many secret and execrable rites, which being finished, he sealed up the doors, and set a guard upon them, giving order, that none should open them until his return: but being broken open, upon the news of his death, there was found a woman hanging by the hair of her head, her hands extended, and her belly ripped up, that a presage of future success might be made by the inspection of her liver. And the like it seems he had done at Antioch, where many chests were found in the palace filled with dead men's skulls, and several dead bodies hid in wells, no doubt the unhappy engines and monuments of his diabolical divinations, (if the story be not made worse, than perhaps it was.)

^k Theodor. l. iii. c. 23.

^l Id. *ibid.* c. 26, 27.

XVII. It was about the midst of summer when they came within sight of the Persian army, where, after several skirmishes, he was within a hopeful prospect of a final victory, (the Persian affairs being brought to that low ebb, that ambassadors were appointed,^m and presents prepared, which were to be sent next day, to beg a treaty in order to peace,) when venturing too far in the pursuit,ⁿ he was on a sudden struck with a horseman's lance, which grazing upon his arm, passed in at his side, and went to the very lower lap or fillet of the liver, with which as being two-edged he cut his fingers while he strove to pull it out, and fainting with loss of spirits, sunk down upon his horse's neck. There went a report, that finding himself mortally wounded,^o he took a handful of his blood, and throwing it up into the air, cried out, "Galilean, thou hast got the better!" Though others conceived he did it in contempt of the sun, for having assisted the Persians more than him; especially the sun having been the predominant planet that governed his nativity. We are told by an author of good credit,^p that being laid down for a while upon the bank of a river, he had persuaded some of his most inward confidants secretly to convey him into, and drown him in the river, that so the suddenness of his disappearing might take off the ignominy of his death, and give him (as it had done some others in the like cases) the reputation of a deity. And the plot had been accomplished, had not some of the imperial eunuchs discovered and prevented it. But of this there are no intimations in any other writer. However it is certain some designs were laid that way, to create in the people's minds a belief of his divinity. For Libanius tells us,^q that the messengers that brought the first news of his being slain, were almost stoned to death, for bringing up a slanderous and lying report concerning a person who was supposed to be a god, and consequently immortal. His wounds being perceived to be dangerous, he was laid upon a target, and carried into his tent, where he died at midnight. Various were the reports that went about how he came by his death-wound:^r some say, it

^m Liban. Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 303.

ⁿ Am. Marcell. l. xxv. c. 3.

^o Theodor. l. iii. c. 25. Sozom. l. vi. c. 2.

^p Greg. Naz. Orat. iv. in Jul. vol. i. p. 117.

^q Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 330, 331.

^r Greg. Naz. Orat. iv. in Jul. vol. i. p. 116. Socrat. l. iii. c. 21. Sozom. l. vi. c. 1. Theodor. l. iii. c. 25.

was given by an angel ; Callistus, an officer of his guards, and who wrote his acts in an heroic poem, that it was done by a demon ; some say it was a revolted Persian that did it ; others, a Saracen ; others a jester, that used to go freely up and down the army ; and some, that it was one of his own soldiers, out of revenge, that he had unadvisedly brought the army into so great distress and danger. Libanius does not only affirm that he was killed by fraud and treachery,^s but without any other warrant than his own presumption, confidently charges it upon the Christians,^t who took this opportunity (he says) to be revenged of him, and to rid him out of the world ; and supports his conjecture with no wiser and stronger a probability, than that none of the Persians would confess who did it ; no not, though the king proclaimed a great reward to the person who should appear to demand and challenge it. But Ammianus Marcellinus,^u a more grave and sober writer, and present at the fight, says, it was uncertain who did it ; and Eutropius, a Pagan too,^w and at that time upon the spot, that it was done *hostili manu*, by the hand of the enemy. Among the various extraordinary passages relating to his death, that reported by Sozomen must not be omitted ;^x who tells us, that a certain intimate acquaintance of Julian's, following after him in his Persian expedition, came to a place, where finding no convenient inn to entertain him, he lodged that night in the church, and in his sleep he had a vision, wherein he beheld several apostles and prophets, who assembling themselves into one company, began to complain of the extreme injuries the emperor did to the church, and to advise what was to be done in that case. The consult was long, and when they could come to no conclusion, two of the company rose up, and bade the rest be of good cheer, and as resolving to put a sudden period to Julian's life and reign, immediately departed the assembly. The man hereupon was afraid, and resolved to go no farther, but there to await the issue of things. The next night, taking his rest in the same place, he beheld the very same convention, whereinto the two persons, who the night before had gone out against Julian, suddenly returned from their expedition, and gave an account to the company of his being slain ; as the very same day his death was

^s Orat. de Templ. p. 24.

^t Orat. x. in Jul. nec. vol. ii. p. 324. Vid. Sozom. l. vi. c. 1.

^u Lib. xxv. c. 3.

^w Lib. x. c. 8.

^x Lib. vi. c. 2.

proclaimed by horsemen in the air to Didymus at Alexandria. And when Julian the monk,^y whom the Syrians called Sabba, or the aged, and who had his cell on the eastern bank of the river Euphrates, in the province of Osroena, had heard of the great severities wherewith the emperor had threatened the Christians, he applied himself with continual tears and prayers to heaven, when on a sudden he started up, wiped his eyes, and put on a most pleased and cheerful look. Those that were near him were surprised at it, and asked the reason of so sudden a change? He told them, that the wild-boar that had wasted the Lord's vineyard, had now paid for all the injuries he had done to it; that he lay dead upon the ground, incapable of doing it any further harm. Whereat they all rose up, and sang a gratulatory hymn to God. And soon after they understood, that the very same day and hour Julian had been slain in the battle: to all which let me add what Zonaras relates on this occasion,^z that a certain judge at Antioch, and he too a Gentile, watching all night at the *prætorium*, saw an unusual constellation in the heavens, the stars forming themselves into these words, *Σήμερον ἐν Περσίδι Ἰουλιανὸς ἀναιρεῖται*, "this day is Julian slain in Persia:" which accordingly proved true, and became the means of the man's conversion to the Christian faith. He died June 26, anno 363, in the thirty-second year of his age, when he had reigned not full two years: a prince truly of great virtues, prudent, considerative, impartial, strictly just, chaste, and temperate, patient of hardship, unwearied in his labours, valorous in his attempts, even to rashness and precipitancy. He had a quick wit, but too much inclined to satirism, a nimble apprehension, and learning beyond most princes; but withal, was a passionate affecter of praise and popularity; one that loved to talk much, and not seldom vain-gloriously enough in his own commendation. He was, even in the character of his own writers, superstitious rather than religious, an immoderate lover of the rites, ceremonies, and usages of Paganism, which he revived, and defended both with his sword and pen, and in the exercise whereof he spent no inconsiderable portions of his time, and professed himself an hearty enemy to all that opposed them. In short, to give him his due, had not his memory been stained with an apostacy from the best religion that ever was, and so bitter and

^y Theodor. l. iii. c. 24.

^z Annal. lib. xiii. c. 13.

incurable a spleen against the Christians, he might have passed for one of the best princes that ever managed the Roman empire.

XVIII. But his death happened opportunely to the poor Christians; it was *πληγὴ καιρία ὄντως, καὶ παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ σωτήριος*, a truly seasonable wound, says Nazianzen,^a that restored health and safety to the Christian world, who otherwise were sure to have felt (and it was but what he had threatened) the utmost effects of his severity and displeasure, had he returned victorious from the Persian expedition. And the truth is, had his reign been extended to any great number of years, he would have mightily distressed Christianity, and have reduced it perhaps to a lower ebb than ever it had been at in the times of any of his most fierce and violent predecessors. Nobody therefore can blame them, if they entertained the news of his death with joy and triumph; the churches were filled with hymns and thanksgivings,^b their houses with feasts and merriments, and the very theatres chaunted out the glories of the cross, and derided the vanity of the heathen oracles: and at Antioch, the people insulted over Maximus, the great philosopher and magician, that had blown up Julian into all this folly and cruelty, and unanimously cried out, “What’s now become, O thou foolish Maximus! of all thy oracles and divinations? God and his Christ have overcome.” I conclude this short but famous period with the words of Nazianzen, in his second invective against Julian, published not long after his death, which when he had at large discoursed of, “These, (says he,^c) are the accounts that are given by us poor contemptible Galileans, who worship a crucified Saviour, and profess ourselves the disciples and followers of fishermen, and illiterate tradesmen, as they are pleased to phrase it. These are the things which we sit down and sing in the company of our old women; we that have half-starved ourselves with long fasting and abstinence; that watch, it seems, to little purpose, and play the fool in our night-devotions; and yet have made shift to lay you flat upon your back. Where are now your grammarians and orators? where are your privy-councillors, (that I may begin my *ἐπινίκιον*, in the words of one of our unlearned and despised party?) what are become of your

^a Orat. iv. in Jul. vol. i. p. 117.

^b Theodor. l. iii. c. 28.

^c Orat. iv. in Jul. vol. i. p. 122, 123.

sacrifices, your rites and mysteries? where are your public and your secret victims? where are your arts of inspecting entrails, so much talked of? your prognostic divinations, and spirits that gave answers out of the belly? what is become of the great Babylon you spake so much of, and the whole world, which by the promise of a few execrable sacrificial divinations, you had devoured and conquered? where are the Persians, and the Medes, which you had already in your hands? where are those gods that led you on, and yet were forced to be carried before you, that fought both before, and together with you? where are the oracles, that denounced such heavy things against the Christians, and fixed the time of our utter destruction, even to the rooting our very name out of the world? They are all vanished, and are proved to be lies and falsehoods, and the boasts and vauntings of the ungodly are fled, and have disappeared like the shadow of a dream."

SECTION IV.

IN WHAT CASE GENTILISM STOOD UNDER THE REIGNS OF JOVIAN,
VALENTINIAN, AND VALENS.

Jovian chosen emperor, resolutely refuses it, until the army professes itself Christian. He is traduced by the Pagans for his zeal towards Christianity, which he owns to be the true religion. His granting some kind of indulgence to men of any religion. The great commendations given him by Themistius the philosopher upon that account. Moderation in religion highly cried up and pleaded for by the Gentiles, when themselves stood in need of it. The sudden death of Jovian. Valentinian elected by the army. His zeal against Pagan idolatry, and sufferings upon that account in the time of Julian. His brother Valens taken into a partnership in the government. Indulgence granted to every one to use his own way of worship. This liberty abused by the Gentiles, and therefore retrenched by several laws. No Christians to be condemned to the gladiatory sports, or to be forced to guard the heathen temples. The vanity of a prediction of the Gentiles, that the Christian religion should last but 365 years. All divinary consultations severely prohibited in the Eastern parts. A magical *tripos* made by the Gentiles for inquiring after Valens's successor, and the manner of consulting it: Theodorus, a Gentile, intimated to be the person. These transactions discovered to Valens, who puts to death all persons concerned in the conspiracy. A severe process against all philosophers and magicians. Maximus, tutor to Julian, beheaded upon this occasion. Great rigour used towards all whose names began with THEOD, and yet Theodosius escaped, and was his successor. Books of magic ordered to be burnt. St. Chrysostom in danger upon that account. Smart proceedings against the Gentiles in the West, but moderated by the intercession of the senate. Privileges granted to the provincial priests. The Saracens, when and how converted to the Christian faith. Arianism, how it crept in among the Goths. Their letters

invented, and the Bible translated into that language by Ulphilas, their bishop. Valens's rage against the Catholics mitigated by an oration which Themistius, the philosopher, made to him to that purpose.

UPON Julian's death, Jovian^c (or, as some call him, Jovinian) was by the suffrage of the army saluted emperor. He was *primicerius* of the domestical protectors, or captain-general of the imperial guards, a firm and resolved Christian; insomuch that when Julian published an edict, that the army should either sacrifice or disband, he presently offered to lay down his arms; but the emperor knew him to be too considerable a person to be easily parted with, and therefore continued him in his command. Upon the shouts and acclamations of the soldiers, he bluntly told them, that he for his part was a Christian, and could not take upon him the command of those men, or the conduct of that army, that had been trained up in the impious principles of the deceased emperor; nor could he expect any success from their arms, who, being destitute of the Divine blessing and protection, must needs become a prey and derision to their enemies. To this they almost unanimously replied, "Make no scruple, sir, to venture upon the empire, nor let the impiety of our principles be an argument with you to decline it. For you will reign over Christians, men instructed in the laws of piety: those of us that are eldest, were brought up under the institution and discipline of Constantine; those that are next, under the instructions of Constantius; and for the late emperor, his reign was so short, that it was not capable of making any deep impression upon the minds of men." Upon this assurance, he took the government upon him, and made peace with the Persians upon the best terms that those evil circumstances they were under could admit. The trouble which the Gentiles conceived for the death of Julian was doubled upon them by the election of Jovian, whose zeal for Christianity they were too well assured of, and therefore in all places traduced and exposed him by lampoons and pasquils,^d especially at Antioch, where they scattered libels in the streets, and affixed them at every corner, and the very old women broke scurrilous jests upon him; and the rather perhaps to cry quits with the Christians, who had not long before

^c Socrat. l. iii. c. 22. Sozom. l. vi. c. 3 Theodor. l. iv. c. 1.

^d Suid. in voc. ἰοβιαυδς, ubi plura exempla dantur.

dealt so by Julian: as indeed petulancy and a sarcastic wit were the peculiar humour of that place.

II. He began his reign, as became a wise and good prince, with the care of religion. Warned with the unhappy fate of his predecessor,^e he wrote immediately to the governors of provinces, to open the churches, and diligently attend the solemnities of divine worship, and let the subjects know, that the Christian religion was the only true way of worship. He restored to the several churches the gifts and revenues, and to the clergy, and those who lived within the verge of them, the privileges and immunities which Julian had taken from them, particularly, he restored the corn canon, (as they call it,) the yearly allowance of corn, which Constantine the great had settled upon the church, and which the late emperor had abolished. But, because a great dearth raged at that time, he was forced for the present, to cut off two-thirds of that tribute, promising to restore it entire, as soon as the famine was over, and would, no doubt have made good his word, had God spared his life. He also recalled all those, both ecclesiastic and secular persons, that in the late times had been banished for their religion. The Pagan temples he commanded to be shut up, and the public sacrifices to be taken away; whereupon the priests crept into corners, and the very philosophers were so frightened, that they laid aside the *pallium*, and habited themselves according to the common garb. But this I conceive they did more out of fear of the Christians, upon this great turn of affairs, than any positive constitution of the emperor to that purpose. For, wherever he came, he kindly received, and honourably entertained the philosophers, and by an edict, gave every man leave to serve God in his own way,^f which I understand, not of the public, but private exercise of religion. By this time he was entered upon his consulship, and being arrived at Ancyra in Galatia, was met by Themistius the philosopher, with some others of the senatorian order, where Themistius, in an elegant oration,^g congratulated him for his new honour and dignity, and at large gives him his just commendation, especially for his compassion to the afflicted and banished, and his admirable care of religion, his great indulgence towards all, in leaving every one to the freedom of his own choice; and herein imitating God,

^e Sozom. l. vi. c. 3. Theodor. l. iv. c. 4. Philost. l. viii. c. 5.

^f Vid. Themist. Orat. v. (al. xii.) ad Jovian. p. 67, 68.

^g Ibid.

who having planted in men's minds a natural inclination to religion, has left every man free, to choose that way and means wherein he may best express it. Princes might compel to the outward act, but the mind was above all warrants or threatenings; force may make men hypocrites, but not religious; and to worship the imperial purple, not the deity. Thence that unsteadiness and inconstancy that is in such men's profession; for the force being taken off, they fluctuate to this or that, and change their religion oftener than Euripus ebbs and flows: an argument, which he there manages with all the advantages of a smooth, plausible, and rhetorical insinuation. And it was an argument the Gentiles much insisted on in those days.^b They were under hatches, and now all the cry is for gentleness and moderation, and leaving men to the dictates of their own consciences, which might be persuaded, but could never be compelled; that force in this case was as unreasonable, as it was insignificant, the effect whereof might be *σκιαγραφία τις μεταβολῆς, οὐ μετὰστασις δόξης*, (as Libanius argues,) a painted and hypocritical conversion, not a real change of opinion and principles. But, whatever might be said for the thing itself, they forgot when this would not pass with themselves for current doctrine, and how miserably in former times they had treated the poor Christians, whom they had not only tempted to apostacy, by promises and persuasions, but had endeavoured to force them to abandon their religion, by all the methods of the most barbarous and merciless severities. But this only by the by. Besides this, the emperor put out a law, to make it capital for any to ravish,ⁱ or but to attempt to marry the consecrated virgins, (which we now call Nuns,) occasioned by the looseness and iniquity of the late times, wherein many had either been by flattery courted into marriages, or by force had been compelled to lewd embraces. This law is dated, February 19, 364, and himself survived not long after, dying at Dada-stana, a village in the confines of Galatia and Bithynia, of poisonous mushrooms, whereof, some say he had plentifully supped; more probably he was choked with the smoke of coals; or, as others, with the damp of a new-plastered chamber; and perhaps both concurred to give him his death. However it

^b Vid. etiam. Liban. Orat. de Templ. p. 18. et Orat. in Jul. x. nec. vol. ii. p. 290.

ⁱ Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. Tit. xxv. l. 2. Sozom. l. vi. c. 3.

was, he was found dead in his bed, after he had reigned not full eight months : a valuable prince, whose reign it is like, had it been longer, would have rendered the condition both of church and state very happy and prosperous.

III. The army marched to Nice,^k where a council of officers being called, in order to the election of a new emperor, they unanimously pitched upon Valentinian, tribune of the second *schole* of the *salarii*, whom they had left behind them at Ancyra : a man he was of great spirit and courage, and had suffered deep for his religion. Being under Julian, he was bound, by virtue of his place, to attend the emperor when he went to offer sacrifice in the temple,^l where the priests stood ready at the door, with branches in their hands, (as the custom was,) to sprinkle holy-water upon those that entered in, some few drops whereof fell upon Valentinian, who (vexed to be defiled with their idolatrous rites) struck the priest a box on the ear in the emperor's presence, and tearing off that part of his garment whereon the water had fallen, threw it away with scorn and indignation. Julian was enraged to see his religion affronted to his face, but dissembled his passion, and not willing to give him the honour of martyrdom, found fault with him for negligence in his office, and turned him out, and banished him, some say, to Melitina, a desolate town in Armenia ; or, as others affirm, to Thebais in Egypt, whence he returned in the beginning of Jovian's reign. Messengers were immediately despatched to Ancyra, to carry him the welcome news, and conduct him to Nice ; where the soldiers, setting him upon a shield, shewed him openly, and proclaimed him emperor, but withal, required that he would take to him a partner in the empire, and the noise was loud and clamorous, whereupon, beckoning with his hand to make silence, he replied, with a resolution that became a prince, "it was in your power, gentlemen, to make me emperor, but, being so, it is not yours, but my part, to command : submission is your duty as subjects, mine, as emperor, to take care of the commonwealth : " an answer that struck them dumb ; however within a month he assumed his brother Valens to be his colleague in the empire, to whom he allotted the Eastern parts, having reserved the Western to himself.

^k Socrat. l. iv. c. 1. Sozom. l. vi. c. 6. Theodor. l. iv. c. 6. Philost. l. viii. c. 8.

^l Sozom. ubi supr. Theodor. l. iii. c. 16.

IV. To render their government, at the first setting out, more grateful and acceptable to the people, they endeavoured to oblige all parties by a general toleration, enacting,^m that every one might worship God according to the rites of that religion wherein he had been educated; that no man should be compelled to this or that way of worship, nor subjects be forced to profess the same religion with their prince; but all be left to a free and unconstrained choice: an act for which they are sufficiently cried up by Pagan writers. The heathens were not to be taught what use to make of this indulgence, which they wound up to the highest peg; so that not content with the private exercise of their superstition,ⁿ in many places they set it up publicly, solemnized their accustomed festivals, celebrated their impious mysteries, and made their wild and extravagant processions through the open streets. This general liberty the emperors by degrees began to restrain; by a law published this first year of their reign,^o they seized the farms and revenues belonging to the heathen temples, taken away by Constantine and his sons, and either given or sold to private persons, but resumed and restored by Julian, which they now annexed as an additional revenue to their own private patrimony. By another,^p they forbad all night-sacrifices, charms, and magic divinations, these being accounted most malignant and dangerous, and the night fittest to cover such black and hellish rites. But upon a representation made by Prætextatus, proconsul of Greece, how intolerable this constitution would be to that people, if it took away their sacred mysteries, so universally entertained and revered by all mankind; Achaia had the favour to be exempt from it, provided they acted nothing herein but what was agreeable to the ancient usages of their own country. They took care that no Christian,^q upon pretence of any crime whatsoever, should be condemned to the gladiatory sports, as being dishonourable to the Christian name; and whereas the Gentile temples were fain to be guarded by soldiers, to defend them from the assaults of Christians, who could not well brook the liberty lately indulged them, wherever they had power and

^m Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. Tit. xvi. l. 9. Am. Marc. l. xxx. c. 9. Symmach. Epist. l. x. Ep. 54. ⁿ Theodor. l. iv. c. 24. ^o Cod. Theodos. lib. x. Tit. i. l. 8.

^p Ibid. lib. ix. Tit. xvi. l. 7. Zosim. l. iv. c. 3.

^q Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. Tit. xl. l. 8.

opportunity, (as they now had at Rome, the elder Symmachus, a zealous Pagan, being provost of that city,) they forced Christians upon that service; which being complained of, Valentinian commanded,^r that no judge or officer should presume to do it, upon pain of the loss both of estate and life. Both these laws are directed to Symmachus, and bear date anno 365. By these proceedings the Gentiles perceived the vanity of their own predictions; for finding that Christianity had gained ground under the fiercest persecutions,^s and that their own religion sunk and declined apace, to keep up the spirits of their party, they produced a prophecy, pretended to have been dictated by one of the oracles of Greece, wherein they declared, that though Christ himself was no magician, yet that St. Peter had procured by art magic that the Christian religion should last 365 years, and then immediately vanish out of the world. This period was now run out, and St. Augustine, who wrote several years after, does sufficiently deride and expose their folly, the event having so palpably confuted their prediction.

V. But the insolent carriage of the Gentiles was not easily taken down: they improved the public toleration; and seeing Valens heartily espousing the Arian cause, and spending the main of his severity upon the Catholics, began every day to grow more bold and impudent, until he was forced to make it capital for any, either in public or private, either by night or day, to exercise any art of divination, or to consult them that did so. The occasion of this law was this: several of the most eminent philosophers of that time were inwardly grieved at the flourishing state of Christianity,^t they grew weary of Valens's government, and longed for another emperor of their own religion; and that this design might have both greater encouragement and reputation, they secretly confederated with some great persons at court, and officers in the army, and tried by all methods of divination, to know who was likely to succeed Valens in the empire. At last a *tripos* made of laurel was artificially prepared, and consecrated with certain magic charms and invocations: it was placed in the middle of a room perfumed

^r Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. i. l. 1.

^s August. de Civit. Dei. l. xviii. c. 53. vol. vii. p. 536. et vid. c. seq.

^t Sozom. l. vi. c. 35. Socrat. l. iv. c. 19. Philost. l. ix. c. 15. Am. Marc. l. xxix. c. 1. Zosim. l. iv. c. 13. videsis Zonaram, sed hanc rem paulò aliter narrantem. Annal. l. xiii. c. 16.

with Arabian spices, the charger upon which it was set had upon its utmost brim the twenty-four letters of the alphabet neatly engraved, and set at due distances from each other; then a person clad in linen vestments came in with laurel branches in his hand, and after some charms performed, shook a magical ring hanging at a curtain about the edge of the charger, until by jumping up and down, it fell upon such or such letters of the alphabet, where it seemed to stay, the priest thereupon composing certain heroic verses in answer to the interrogatories that had been put. The letters which the ring pointed out in this case were these four, $\Theta. E. O. \Delta$. which being put together composed these two syllables, THEOD; whereupon one that stood by presently cried out, that the oracle plainly intended Theodorus, who was indeed a man of birth and quality, and famous for his learning, wisdom, modesty, and humanity, but a Gentile, and one who they all passionately desired might be promoted to the empire. But it was not long before the whole conspiracy was discovered to the emperor, who divided between astonishment and anger commanded the business to be brought under a thorough scrutiny and examination. Theodorus was beheaded, the maker of the *tripos* burnt alive, and all the rest that were any ways concerned in the fatal consult exquisitely tortured, and then put to death, whose arraignments, racks, and severe usages, may be read at large in Ammianus Marcellinus. All philosophers that came to hand were sure to be executed; and the emperor, who was always cruel, was in this case outrageous, not sparing any that did but go habited like philosophers, though they addicted not themselves to those studies; a fringed cloak being then taken for a sufficient evidence of a magician and a conjuror. Among these philosophers was Maximus, Julian's great master, the most celebrated philosopher of that age: Valens owed him an old grudge, for an affront he had done him and his brother in Julian's time, and therefore in the beginning of his reign had treated him with those exquisite severities which Eumapius so tragically complains of; and being now charged with being privy to the plot, though he only knew of it, and told the conspirators they would all come to an untimely end, was carried to Ephesus, the place of his nativity, and there beheaded. But above all others, the emperor's fury raged against those, whose

names began with those four letters, whether Theodorus, Theodotus, Theodosius, Theodulus, or the like, whom he put to death wherever he found them, by the same bloody policy where-with Herod once butchered the infants at Bethlehem, hoping that in the number he should make away the new-born Messiah, and king of the Jews; and this prosecuted with so much rigour, that many, to avoid the danger, changed their names, as not being willing to lose their lives for a malignant name. And yet God, who delights many times to defeat men's malicious curiosity, suffered the great Theodosius to escape, and in despite of all his care and cruelty to succeed him in the Eastern empire; and it is said, that his parents were particularly warned in a dream to give him that name, as an omen, it seems, of his after greatness. Nor did Valens persecute men only, but books, upon this occasion, commanding a search to be made for all books of magic, or any other curious or unlawful art, which, being piled upon heaps, were publicly burnt. And at this time it was, that Chrysostom,^u then a youth, was in some danger: for, as he was going one day to church, he took up a book, which a suspected person had thrown into the river, and upon perusal found it a book of magic, and was espied by a soldier that passed by, and saw him and his companion take it up. They knew not well what to do with it, it being almost equally dangerous to keep or part with it: but they threw it away, and escaped the danger.

VI. In the West things were carried towards the Gentiles with a more easy hand. Several of the senatorian order at Rome had been accused of practising in unlawful divination,^v and the judge, to whom the examination of the cause was referred, had proceeded in it with an over-rigorous partiality, and had made a very ill representation of it to the emperor, who had begun to prosecute smartly: but the senate sent a committee to Valentinian, to beseech him that persons might not be punished above the merits of their crimes, nor any senator extrajudicially put upon the rack. The emperor replied, he had given no such order, and that these were reports framed on purpose to throw ill reflections upon him; and in his rescript to the senate declared,^w that he looked upon soothsaying as not akin to magic, and so long as innocently practised, he found no fault with it,

^u Hom. xxxviii. in Act. s. 5. vol. ix. p. 293.

^v Am. Marcel. l. xxviii. c. 1.

^w Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. Tit. xvi. l. 9.

but permitted both it and the other parts of the religion of their ancestors to be used, as the laws which he had made to that purpose in the beginning of his reign could sufficiently witness. And for the charge brought against the senators,^x he had referred the debate of it to the provost of the city, who if he could not determine it, then he commanded, that the persons concerned, with an account of all proceedings in the case, should be sent to him. By another law, about the same time, he granted to the provincial priests,^y (they were those that superintended a whole province, and were usually chosen out of the body of the *curiales*: their business was to take care of the temples and sacred rites, the poms and processions upon festivals, and at their own charge to provide for, and manage the public shows and spectacles; to these he granted) that they should be free from the burden of all civil offices, and enjoy the same privilege with persons of honour and quality, not to be racked and tortured, and have the comitative honour, or the same place and dignity which the *comites*, who had well discharged their trust, had conferred upon them as the reward of their pains and care. At this time also he took order about the players,^z who acted at the public sports and theatres, (a trade expressly forbidden by the canons of the church,) that in case of imminent danger of death, they might, upon their repentance and earnest desire, be admitted to the sacraments, (that is, both baptism and the eucharist,) provided it was done with the allowance of the bishop, and the inspection of the civil magistrate; and that if such persons should recover, they should be no longer forced to attend the service of the theatre.

VII. It was now about the year 372, when Mavia,^a queen of the Saracens, a people inhabiting the parts of Arabia that lay next Egypt, sent Moses (who lived a monastic life in the neighbouring wilderness, a man no less famous for his miracles than his piety) to Alexandria to be ordained bishop, who refusing to be consecrated by Lucius, whom the Arians had thrust up into that see, newly vacant by the death of Athanasius, betook himself to the Catholic bishops that lived in exile, and having from their hands received his ordination, returned back into his own

^x Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. Tit. xvi. l. 10.

^y Ibid. lib. xii. Tit. i. l. 75.

^z Ibid. lib. xv. Tit. vii. l. 1.

^a Socrat. l. iv. c. 36. Sozom. l. vi. c. 38. Theodor. l. iv. c. 23. Rufin. l. ii. c. 6.

country, the greatest part whereof he converted to the Christian faith. And the work was afterwards carried on to great perfection, when Zocomus, head of one of the principal tribes, upon the birth of a son (which a religious monk assured him he should have, if he would embrace Christianity) was baptized, and brought over his people to the same faith. Christianity likewise made a further progress among the northern nations, especially the Goths that dwelt upon the Danube;^b for Phritigernus, one of the princes of that nation, having by the assistance which Valens had lent him, gained a considerable victory against Athanaricus, another of those princes, did in gratitude to the emperor, and as a firm assurance of his friendship, entertain the Christian religion into his country, and the Arians being at this time the only powerful faction at court, took this opportunity to introduce Arianism among the Goths, though it had taken root there some time before by means of Ulphilas their bishop, who coming on an embassy in the reign of Constantius, (Philostorgius places it in the time of Constantine,^c) had fallen in with Eudoxius, Acacius, and others of that party, by whom he was perverted to their pernicious principles, which he carried back with him, and strenuously propagated in his own country. He was the first that found out the Gothic letters, and having done so, translated the Bible into their native language, which mightily conduced to the further speedy success of Christianity in those parts. And one thing especially is memorable in this case, that in this translation he omitted the Books of Kings, (which took in also those of Samuel and the Chronicles,) because these containing little but an account of wars, would be apt to inflame the minds of that people, who being naturally a fierce warlike nation, needed rather a bridle, than a spur to quicken them to martial undertaking. Valens, in the mean while, miserably harassed the poor Catholics, whom he pursued with that rage and violence, that Themistius,^d the philosopher, undertook their cause, which he pleaded in a set oration before the emperor, shewing him, that it was no wonder if there was such difference of opinions amongst them, which was yet but inconsiderable, if compared with those numerous and vastly distant opinions that were among the Greeks, which must necessarily breed some dis-

^b Socrat. l. iv. c. 33. Sozom. l. vi. c. 37.

^c Lib. ii. c. 5.

^d Socrat. l. iv. c. 32. Sozom. l. vi. c. 36.

gust and disagreement; and that perhaps God was delighted with this variety of sentiments, seeing it tended to beget in men's minds a profounder reverence towards the Divine majesty, when they found the knowledge of him so deep, that no human capacity could fathom or comprehend it. And thus, while he pleaded for the Catholics, he cunningly insinuated the cause of the Gentiles, which elsewhere he defends upon the same grounds. This oration, translated by Dudithius, is still extant in Latin, which Petavius, to supply the defect, has turned into Greek, but denies (though upon very weak reasons) that it was the same pronounced by that orator upon this occasion; not to say, that the passages cited out of it by Socrates and Sozomen are exactly to be found in it. And it seems an argument he much delighted in, this being much-what the same both for words and matter, with that consular oration, which he delivered before Jovian at his entrance upon the consulship. Little else is memorable in the time of these emperors: Valentinian died the 17th of November, anno 375, whom Valens survived scarce three years, whose reign in the general was more indulgent to Pagans, and more severe to catholic Christians, than that of any Christian emperor either before or since.

SECTION V.

THE STATE OF PAGAN RELIGION UNDER THE REIGNS OF GRATIAN, THEODOSIUS THE GREAT, AND HIS SUCCESSORS.

Theodosius advanced by Gratian to the Eastern empire. His restraining the boldness and liberty of the Pagans by severe laws against apostacy, sacrifices, divinations, &c. Gentilism hereby reduced to a low ebb. Particular provision about the temple at Ædessa. Gratian refuses the sacerdotal stole, and the title of Pontifex Maximus, hitherto worn by Christian emperors. Proceedings against Paganism revived, and more briskly carried on in the East. The famous temple of Serapis at Alexandria defaced, and the ridiculous follies of Gentile idolatry publicly exposed. Sedition and tumult hereupon raised by the Gentiles, and great mischief done to Christians. The reformation carried on by Theophilus bishop of Alexandria. The celebrated image of Serapis openly burnt. The ruin of this temple foretold by the Gentiles themselves. The rest of the temples at Alexandria demolished. The lewdness and debaucheries usually committed in those places shewn by a particular instance. Christian churches erected over those places. The river Nilus not flowing so plentifully as formerly. This charged by the Gentiles as a punishment from the gods for the destruction of

their temples; but proved false by a contrary event. The same reformation carried on in the Eastern parts. The miraculous demolishing a temple at Apamea by Marcellus bishop of that place. Theodosius at Rome persuades the Gentile part of the senate to become Christians, but is obstinately rejected. Symmachus for his insolence and importunity banished Rome. The Gentile cause undertaken, and *ex professo* pleaded by Libanius: the sum of his oration *de Templis* presented to the emperor, but nothing gained from him. Attempts of the Gentiles against his life. Several edicts for the suppression of Pagan rites. Theodosius's last law against the whole body of their religion, and the several parts and branches of it. The death of that good emperor. The same work pursued by Arcadius, his son and successor. The remaining temples pulled down, and the materials disposed of to public buildings. The council of Carthage petitions Honorius for the abolishing the remainders of idolatrous rites in Africa, with the emperor's answer. Several laws of Honorius, and the younger Theodosius, in pursuance of the same design through all parts of the empire, briefly noted. Paganism afraid to show its head, and generally driven into corners. The whole concluded with a short recapitulation out of Theodoret.

THE imperial brothers dying, the government rested in the hands of the two sons of Valentinian; Gratian, who had already reigned twelve, and Valentinian junior, who had reigned three years. Gratian found work enough on all hands, the empire labouring under great incumbrances, and having little assistance from his brother, who was but young, was necessitated to take in a partner for the Eastern empire, to defend those parts, at this time miserably infested by the Goths. The person he pitched on was beyond all exception; Theodosius, a Spaniard, who from the renown of his actions deservedly bears the surname of Great. The Gentiles for the main had enjoyed the peaceable exercise of their religion for many years, having met with little or no interruption in it since the times of Constantius: and for the two first years of Theodosius, almost wholly taken up with wars, their temples were open,^e and they had the freedom of their old rites and ceremonies. So that many began to look kindly upon their former superstitions, and others, meeting with such cruel usage in the reign of Valens, (when the persecution was carried on by a joint concurrence of Arians, Jews, and Gentiles,) took shelter in the old religion. Insomuch, that the emperor found it necessary to restrain it by a law dated April 26, anno 381.^f That they who apostatized from Christianity to Paganism should lose all power of making a will, (ever accounted the great birth-right and privilege of a Roman,) so that none of his friends or kindred should be the better for any estate which he left behind

^e Vid. Zosim. l. iv. c. 30.

^f Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. vii. l. 1. vid. l. 2, 3, 4.

him; which he and Valentinian explained and ratified by many subsequent edicts, several clauses being added respecting both persons and things. About the end of the same year he forbade under pain of proscription all divinatory sacrifices,^g either by day or night, or that any should approach the temples for any such purpose; adding, that God is to be worshipped with pure and chaste prayers, not with execrable charms and conjurations. And though it does not appear by this law, that any more than sacrifices used in order to divination were taken away, yet Christians were willing to lay hold of it, and improve it farther than the emperor at present intended it, the temples both in city and country (as Zosimus complains^h) being assaulted, and the Pagans not able to lift up their eyes to heaven, and pay their devotions to the planets, without danger of their heads. Among the rest, there was a famous Pantheon, curiously adorned with abundance of exquisite statues and images of the gods, in the province of Osrhoene, (at *Ædessa*, as Gothofred not improbably conjectures,) this was shut up, but upon the Gentiles' complaint at court, representing that the city was thereby greatly prejudiced, who were wont here to hold their public meetings, and to keep their common festivals, especially those wherein they offered up their prayers for the life and safety of the emperor, it was granted, that it should stand open for these uses,ⁱ that the images should remain by way of ornament, but that no sacrifices should be offered in it. In the Western parts Gratian kept somewhat a severe hand upon the Pagans. He had given them a taste of what they might expect from him, when he refused the sacerdotal robe.^j The Roman emperors had all along borne the office and title of Pontifex Maximus, or chief head of the pontifical college: nay, none of the Christian emperors had hitherto scrupled to accept of it as an honorary title. But when the priests came to confer it upon Gratian, and offered him the pontifical robe, he plainly refused it, accounting it unlawful for him, who was a Christian, to wear that habit. The stole being delivered back to the priests, the chief of their company cried out, if the emperor will not be styled Pontifex Maximus, it will not be long before Maximus be Pontifex; reflecting upon Maximus, who was then ready to invade the empire, and who shortly after

^g Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 7.

^h Lib. iv. c. 33.

ⁱ Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 8.

^j Zosim. l. iv. c. 36.

treacherously murdered Gratian, and became a great friend and patron to the Gentiles. But saving the authority of Zosimus who reports it, plain it is both from some ancient inscriptions, and from the testimony of Ausonius,^k Gratian's tutor, that this title was frequently conferred upon him, though perhaps it might be only by connivance, and not by the allowance of the emperor. But whatever intimations of dislike Gratian might make, the Gentiles were not discouraged from attempting something in the cause of their religion; for finding the public affairs embroiled, they began to take heart, at Rome especially, where a small part of the senate took upon themselves, in the name of the whole, to send an address to the emperor Valentinian, to beg favour in behalf of their religion, but were countermined and quashed by Pope Damasus and St. Ambrose, as we have elsewhere observed. And when a great famine soon after raged at Rome, it was said to proceed from the displeasure of the gods for the neglect and suppression of their religious rites, and that the punishment had a visible signature of the sin upon it, it being but just, that they should want bread themselves, who had taken away from the priests and vestal virgins that little maintenance which the munificence of former times had bestowed upon them. The following year Symmachus was made provost of Rome, who immediately drew up a large address to the emperor, wherein, with all the subtleties of wit and eloquence, he pleaded the cause of his religion. But was happily encountered, answered, and baffled, by the great and learned bishop of Milan: an account whereof we have given at large in the Life of St. Ambrose.

II. The Gentiles in the East, notwithstanding the provision that had been made against it four years since, could not be taken off from tampering with *aruspices*, *augures*, magicians, and the rest of that tribe, which forced Theodosius to quicken the execution of those laws, making it capital for any, either upon any present emergency, or for the knowing any future event, to consult divinatory sacrifices. This rescript is directed to Cynegius, the prætorian prefect of the East, a person honourable both for his greatness and his piety, and employed by the emperor upon the most important services: to him he committed the

^k Imp. Cæs. Gratianus Pius. Felix.—Pont. Max. reliqua vid. ap. Collectores inscript. Unus in ore omnium Gratianus, potestate imperator—Pontifex religione. Auson. grat. action. ad Imp. Gratian. p. 143, 144. inter Panegyricos.

care of reforming Paganism in the Eastern parts,^l especially in Egypt, whither he sent him, anno 387, empowering him to shut up or demolish the Gentile temples, and extirpate their superstitions. Upon his arrival at Alexandria, informers accused several of the senate,^m and brought both their persons and estates in danger, upon pretence, it is like, that they were church-lands, revenues belonging to the Pagan temples. Cynegius upon examination punished the informers, and freed their estates, whose judgment herein upon their petition at court, the emperor himself confirmed. But, alas! Cynegius left the main work imperfect, dying the next year, and was honourably buried at Constantinople. But the work went on however, Theophilus bishop of Alexandria being zealous in it. The first attempt in it was thus: there was at Alexandria an ancient and famous temple, dedicated to Serapis,ⁿ described by Rufinus,^o and affirmed by a geographer of that age to have been a piece of exquisite artifice, and for the stateliness of the building, contrivance of the structure, and solemnity of the worship, to have carried away the glory from all other places, and to have been the almost only admirable spectacle in the whole world. This place Theophilus had begged of the emperor, designing to enlarge it into a church. Workmen were set on to clear the rubbish, who found many dark vaults and cellars, the secret receptacles of the Pagans' most hidden rites and mysteries, out of which they brought many detestable and obscene images and utensils, which they publicly exposed to the scorn and derision of the people. This provoked the Gentiles beyond measure, who immediately gathered into a body, and though the far lesser number, yet being armed with rage and fury, broke in upon the Christians, wounded many of them, others they killed outright, and flying to the temple, engarrisoned themselves in it. Some Christians they had taken prisoners, and brought along with them, whom they forced to do sacrifice, or upon their refusal, put to death with the most exquisite and unheard-of tortures. The party was headed by one Olympus a philosopher, who persuaded them not to desert the religion of their country, but if need was, valiantly to die for it. And when he saw

^l Zosim. l. iv. c. 37.

^m Cod. Theodos. lib. x. Tit. x. l. 19.

ⁿ Descript. Orb. Gr. Lat. Gothofr. p. 18.

^o Rufin. l. ii. c. 22, 23. Socrat. l. v. c. 16, 17. Sozom. l. vii. c. 15.

them dejected for the loss of their images, he told them, they should not be troubled at this, they were indeed no other than what they saw, things material and liable to violence and corruption, but were inhabited by certain divine powers, which upon their defacing were retired into heaven. Several essays were made by the magistrates to bring them to reason, and make them give account of what they had done; but in vain: they despised all arguments and threatenings, whereupon the magistrates were forced to send and acquaint the emperor with what had happened, who, according to the sweetness of his nature, replied, that for the Christians that had been slain, they were happy, having been honoured with the crown of martyrdom; and for their murderers, he resolved to pardon them, in hopes, that so much grace and clemency might become an effectual argument for their conversion: but however, that the temples, that had been the cause of all this, should be pulled down to the ground. The letter was no sooner read, but the Christians entertained it with infinite acclamations, and the Gentiles dispersed and fled: which done, Theophilus, accompanied with the monks, and assisted by Evagrius the augustal prefect, and Romanus commander of the army, again set upon the work; the temple itself they wholly demolished, in the walls whereof they found stones with hieroglyphics engraven upon them,^p resembling a cross, which the Christians interpreted of the honourable ensign of their religion, and were therein the more confirmed, when one skilled in those mystic letters, and lately turned Christian, assured them, those hieroglyphic notes signified the life to come, and that others of those hieroglyphics did impart, that the temple of Serapis should have an end, when those notes were brought to light. Within the circumference of this great building stood a chapel,^q supported by rich marble pillars, the walls overlaid with gold, and that covered as a shield with silver, and that defended by a cover of brass; in this stood the image of Serapis, so large, that with one hand he touched one side, and with the other the other side of the temple, with many quaint devices to abuse and delude the people. They had a tradition, that if any man did but touch this image, the earth would immediately open, the heavens be

^p Socrat. et Sozom. loc. cit. Rufin. l. ii. c. 29.

^q Rufin. ibid. c. 23. Theodor. l. v. c. 22.

dissolved, and all things run into chaos and confusion. But a Christian soldier that stood by, animated thereto by Theophilus the bishop, was resolved to make the experiment: for taking a bill in his hand, he cleft him down the jaws, and finding no other dreadful effects ensue, but an army of mice, which fled out at the breach he had made, they cut him limb from limb; his head, feet, and the rest of his parts, were fastened to ropes, and having been dragged up and down the streets, were burnt in several places of the city, the trunk or body of the image being reserved for a more solemn fire in the amphitheatre. The utter ruin of this temple was, it seems, foretold by Antoninus the philosopher,^r who assured his scholars, it would happen soon after his death; nay, we are told,^s that Olympus himself, while he kept his garrison in it, the very night before the emperor's order did arrive, it being a very dark and tempestuous night, heard a voice in the temple, singing Alleluja. He was not a little surprised, knowing the doors were fast shut, and all the company fast asleep, and seeing nobody, and plainly and distinctly hearing the voice, and the musical note, began to suspect what it portended, and departing privately out of the temple, took ship immediately, and went for Italy.

III. The mother-temple and patron deity being thus rid out of the way, the rest followed with an easier hand, all the Pagan temples and images in that city being overturned,^t the follies, lewdnesses, and impieties whereof were laid open before the people. One instance whereof must not be forgotten. Tyrannus a priest of the temple of Saturn, famous for giving oracles, had his temple frequented by persons of the best quality about that city. When he had a mind to corrupt any of their wives, he would tell the nobleman, it was the gods' pleasure that his wife should come and spend that night's devotions in the temple. The lady was dressed up with all advantages, and night being come, the doors were locked fast upon her, and while she was intent upon her devotions, the priest by secret conveyances crept into the old worm eaten image of Saturn, through which he spake to her, as if it had been the god himself; and having thus prepared her, by unseen cords suddenly put out the lights, and then coming forth, and seizing upon the affrighted lady, easily drew her into lewd embraces. This trade he had followed many

^r Eunap. in vit. Ædes. p. 74, etc.

^s Sozom. l. vii. c. 15.

^t Rufin. l. ii. c. 24.

years, until meeting with one that would not be for his turn, and who knew him by his voice, she complained of the affront to her husband, who discovered the villany, brought Tyrannus to condign punishment, and both temple and idol to a shameful end. These ruined temples were generally turned into churches; ^u out of that of Serapis was built on the one side a *martyrium*, (wherein were reposed the remains of John the Baptist;) on the other, a church called after the name of Arcadius the emperor. It happened upon this revolution, that the river Nile did not so plentifully overflow as it was wont to do.^v The people hereupon began to mutiny, and said, it was because they were not suffered according to their ancient usage to do sacrifice to the river. The governor was troubled, and fearing an open sedition, sent to acquaint the emperor, who returned this answer, that it was better to preserve our duty to God, than to prefer the streams of Nile, or the plenty of the country before piety and religion. Let the river, (said he,) never flow again, if it must be drawn out with charms, appeased with sacrifices, and its waters defiled with blood. But the controversy was soon ended, for the river returned to its ancient course, and rising above the highest mark, (which yet it seldom or never reached,) put them into a quite contrary passion, fearing it would inevitably drown the country. And now the Pagans changed their tune, and turned their scene into droll and ridicule, crying out in their theatres, that the old dotting Nile had lost his retentive faculty, and could no longer hold his water. While others made a more grave and serious use of it, being thereby convinced of the vanity of their native superstition, and going over to Christianity: as indeed, throughout the whole progress of these affairs, incredible numbers were gained over to the Christian faith. These proceedings alarmed the Gentiles in other parts,^w in Arabia, Palestine, Phœnicia, &c. where they stood upon their guard, and hired countrymen to come in and defend their temples. At Apamea stood a celebrated temple dedicated to Jupiter, a vast and strongly-compact structure; this Marcellus bishop of that place resolved to pull down, but could get no man to undertake it, so difficult a thing was it looked upon to demolish it. And indeed so strongly were the

^u Rufin. l. ii. c. 27. et Sozom. l. vii. c. 15.

^v Sozom. l. vii. c. 20. Rufin. l. ii. c. 30.

^w Sozom. *ibid.* c. 15. Theodor. l. v. c. 21.

Pagan temples generally built, and the stones so fast cramped together with irons, that Libanius tells us,^x it cost the Christians no less pains to take them down, than it had done the Gentiles at first to build them up. At length comes a common labourer who ventured upon it, and undermining the foundation of the porticos that upheld it, put fire to them, but a demon appearing in a black dress drove away the fire. After several attempts to no purpose, Marcellus took a pot of water, which he carried into the Church, and falling down before the holy table, heartily recommended the cause to God; then he delivered the pot to Equitius his deacon, who went and threw it upon the fire, which, like so much oil, immediately blew up the flames, which spread without control, so that within a few hours, to the admiration of all that saw it, that strong and stately building lay level with the ground. But the good bishop sped not so well in all his attempts; for going to do the like execution upon a great temple at Aulon,^y a city in that country, while his company were busy about the work, certain Pagans came behind him, and catching him up, threw him into the fire, and burnt him to death. And when afterwards upon the discovery of the murder, his sons would have prosecuted and revenged his death, the provincial synod would not suffer it, affirming, that both he and they, and all his friends, had cause rather to bless God, who had counted him worthy to die in so good a cause.

IV. This great and general waste committed upon Paganism in the Eastern parts, made the Gentiles look about them, inso-much, that their great advocate Libanius, one in so great favour with the emperor, that he made him prætorian prefect, about this time published an Oration *pro Templis*, presented to Theodosius, wherein he boldly pleads the cause of their temples, which he shews originally sprang from that encouragement which the gods gave to the plain but early piety and devotion of mankind, and were enlarged and beautified according as they gained footing in towns and cities. His main business was to encounter the popular arguments which the Christians used for the taking down their temples: as, that the Gentiles made use of them for the celebration of their sacrifices expressly contrary to the laws. This he flatly denies, and challenges any to make it good. And whereas it was pretended, that in their festival entertainments they slew oxen, he answers, it was no such matter. They met

^x Orat. de templ. p. 23.

^y Sozom. l. vii. c. 15.

indeed upon their festival solemnities in the open fields, where he confesses they killed, dressed, and eat a calf or a sheep, and performed it with incense, hymns, and invocation of their gods; but this he says was not forbid by any law, nor was this pulling down the temples, as was plausibly given out, a rational means of bringing over Pagans to Christianity. He grants, it made some hypocrites, none true converts. Many through fear might go to the Christian churches, and compose themselves after their forms and gestures, but when they did so, either worshipped their own gods, or none at all. Besides, that religion was to be planted in men's minds by reason and persuasion, not by force or fear. And whereas it was commonly urged, that this destruction tended plainly to the advantage and benefit of the world, he endeavours to shew, that the favouring and protecting that religion had in all ages entailed the greatest blessings from heaven upon the civil state, and most immediately contributed to the grandeur and majesty of the Roman empire. Nor had the Christians, he says, any reason to pretend, they did this in compliance with the zeal of Constantine and Constantius, those two emperors having been so signally punished for their attempts in this kind: Constantius's posterity being soon cut off; some of his children came to untimely ends, and Constantius himself lived perpetually in a slavish fear of the Persians, and most of his adherents (who reaped the spoils of the temples) had met with some remarkable vengeance that had overtaken them. Having urged this, he further backed his plea with two arguments. First, that next to the imperial palaces, temples were the great glory and ornaments of cities, and therefore in all good reason and policy ought not to be destroyed. Secondly, that however that might be, yet a considerable interest and advantage might be raised by them; for they might be let out, and converted to other uses, and the rents of them be returned into the exchequer; which was better, however, than pulling of them down. And because the monks had been, of all others, the most active and busy in demolishing the Pagan temples, especially those that stood in the fields, he falls very severely upon them, traducing them² (and in the same spiteful representation concur most of the Gentile writers of that age) as a pack of idle drones, and lewd impostors, who, under a grave and demure habit, and

² Liban. Orat. de Templ. p. 10, 11, etc. et p. 29. Zosim. l. v. c. 23. Eunap. in vit. Ædes. p. 79, 80.

by a pretended mortification, coloured over with a procured artificial paleness, and by all the little arts of flattery and insinuation, cheated the world into a good opinion of them, while they were really guilty of gluttony and excess. And that their work might be done more effectually, they had military offices called *sophronistæ*, or *correctors*, to attend them, whose business it was to seize the temples and possessions, and who were no sooner shewed by the monks where to quarry, but like harpies immediately flew upon it, to the utter discouragement of the husbandmen and country-people, who placed all their hopes and expectations of the success and prosperity of their labours in these opportunities of devotion, and pledges of the favour of their gods: and though they had oft complained to the bishops of these irregularities, yet could they find no redress, the bishops always taking part with the monks. This is the sum of his discourse, and, but that Theodosius was a prince renowned for his clemency, it had been prodigious impudence to have talked at that rate to a Christian emperor. However, it did them little good, the process against them went on still, and the total ruin both of their temples and worship followed not long after: which so far enraged that party, that they made several attempts against the life of that great prince; particularly Lucius, commander of the forces at Constantinople, came into the presence, and thrice endeavoured to draw out his sword, with an intent to despatch the emperor, but espying on a sudden (as he thought) a woman of mighty stature, and a terrible aspect, standing behind and guarding the emperor, he departed in a great fright. The next that undertook it was the general of the forces in the East, who, riding upon this errand, fell from his horse and broke his thigh, and died; succeeded in the like conspiracy by Severian, Marsus, Illus, and many more. All which is confessed by Damascius,^a the philosopher, a bitter enemy to Christians.

V. While these things were transacted in the East, zeal against Paganism did not freeze in the Western parts, where (if we may take measures of what was done in other places, from what we find done by St. Martin, bishop of Tours,^b) the Gentile temples, with all their pomp and retinue, went down the wind

^a In vit. Isidor. ap. Phot. Cod. CCXLII.

^b Sulp. Sever. de vit. Martin. c. 10, etc.

apace, and Christianity reaped a very plentiful harvest. Theodosius was now in these parts, and having routed Maximus, came with his son Honorius to Rome, where he summoned the senate,^c whom, in a set oration, he persuaded to renounce their ancient errors, and to embrace the Christian faith, as the only religion that held forth the true method of pardon and expiation of sin, of purity and holiness of life. But the Gentile part of them were stiff and intractable, affirming, they would not prefer a senseless and unreasonable belief before an old warranted way of worship; and that under the influences of this religion their city had prospered for near 1200 years together, and if they should now change it for any other, they knew not what fate might ensue upon it. Theodosius replied, that if they were thus obstinate, he knew no reason why he should be at the charge to maintain them in it, and would therefore withdraw the public allowances made out of the exchequer, nay, would abolish the things themselves which he utterly disliked, and the charges whereof he thought it much more reasonable should be translated to increase the pay and salary of the army. The senators replied, their sacrifices could not be duly celebrated, unless charges were allowed out of the public stock, and that for want hereof, and for the neglect and restraint of their ancient and paternal rites and ceremonies, it was, that the Roman empire died by peace-meal, and was limb after limb pulled in pieces, and become a prey and possession to the barbarous nations, and indeed its inhabitants so generally wasted, that it was reduced to a mere skeleton, and the very ruins of its cities were scarce to be seen. In this contest, the cause of Gentilism was managed, I doubt not, by Symmachus, a man of greatest note and ability at that time, who partly upon the account of a flattering discourse which he had written in praise of Maximus,^d partly for the insolence and importunity of his addresses in behalf of Paganism, fell so deep under the emperor's displeasure, that he was forced to take sanctuary in a Christian church, and soon after, in some disgrace, banished out of Rome, and the suburbicary countries. But upon his submission, he was retaken into favour, and published an Apologetic to the emperor, who advanced him to the honour of being consul, anno 391. But withal, to render him incapable of doing any great service to his cause, he published a

^c Zosim. l. iv. c. 59.

^d Socrat. l. v. c. 14.

law before his departure out of Italy,^e expressly prohibiting all manner of sacrifices, going into temples, or worshipping images, inflicting several fines upon delinquent persons according to their respective places and qualities. Some months after being at Aquileia, he directed a rescript to Evagrius Augustal,^f prefect of Egypt, and to Romanus, commander of the horse, commanding, that none under penalty of his head should sacrifice, frequent the temples, or celebrate any Pagan rites; idolatry, it seems, notwithstanding all the late care, still sprouting up in those parts, unless we will say, it was not until this time that Theodosius sent orders to these two great officers to be assistant to Theophilus in that memorable reformation. The next year the senate at Rome again petitioned the emperor Valentinian for the liberty of their religion, but were denied. Valentinian was then in Gaul, where he was murdered by the treachery of Arbogastes, general of the army, who thereupon advanced Eugenius, a mean schoolmaster, to be emperor, who was courted by the Gentiles on all hands, and flattered by their auguries and divinations into a confidence of success and stability in his usurpation. Upon which account he was prevailed with to grant them the famous altar of Victory, so much, and so often contended for, and public allowances out of the exchequer to defray the charges of its solemnities. Theodosius was at this time at Constantinople, and resented the murder of Valentinian with that indignation that became a generous prince, and to let the Gentiles feel the effects of his displeasure, he forbade the whole exercise of their religion, temples, sacrifices, and all the particular train of their rites and ceremonies: which being the last law he made, that is extant, of this nature, we shall here insert it.^g

“ Emperors, Theodosius, Arcadius, and Honorius, the August, to Rufinus the Prætorian Prefect.

“ Let no man, of what order, rank, or quality soever, whether he be honourable by birth, or eminent for dignity, or of mean birth, breeding, and fortune, let no man presume in any place, or in any city, either to offer, though but an harmless sacrifice to senseless images, or in any more secret way of expiation to worship his chimney deity with fire, or his genius with wine, or

^e Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 10.

^f Ibid. l. 11.

^g Ibid. l. 12.

his paternal household gods with fumes and smoke, or pay adoration by setting up lights, burning frankincense, or hanging up garlands to them. And if any man shall dare to offer sacrifice, or to consult the reeking entrails, let it be lawful for any one to accuse him, and being found guilty, let him receive sentence accordingly, as in cases of high-treason, although it should appear, that he did not herein consult any thing against the life of his prince, or ask any question at all about it : for it is enough to aggravate the greatness of his crime, that he would rescind the very laws of nature, search into things unlawful, disclose what is hidden and secret, attempt what is prohibited, inquire into another's fate, and give hopes of his death or ruin. But if any man shall burn incense to a corruptible image, a piece of human artifice, and by a ridiculous example honour that which himself but just now framed, and shall by crowning the stock with garlands, or by erecting an altar of turfs, do what he can, though but in a mean way, yet a way highly injurious to religion, to pay worship and reverence to a fond statue, let him, as a person guilty of the violation of religion, be punished with the loss of that house or field wherein he ministered to such Pagan superstition. For it is our judgment, that all places wherein it shall appear that incense has been burnt, (provided they be legally proved to belong to the persons that did so,) ought to be confiscated to our exchequer. But if it shall so happen, that the place where such a person shall offer any sacrifice, be a public temple, or a consecrated chapel, or another man's house or ground, if it appear that he did it without the knowledge of the owner, let him be fined in the sum of 25 pounds of gold,^h and let him that connives at, or conceals the fact, be fined the same sum with him who sacrifices. This, our pleasure is, shall be so observed by the judges, *defensors*, and *curiales* of every city, that the officers, having discovered any such matter, shall immediately bring it before the judges, and they forthwith to see to the execution of the penalty. But if the *defensors* and *curiales* shall conceal any thing, either for favour,

^h The ordinary proportion of gold to silver being that of one to twelve, a pound of gold amounts to 36*l.* of our English money. And much at the same rate it was at this time, for the elder Valentinian, by a law dated anno 367, (vid. lib. xii. Cod. Theodos. Tit. vi. l. 13.) appointed, that every pound of gold should be in value 72 Solidi ; every *Solidus Aureus* of that, as generally of all succeeding emperors, weighing four scruples, or 10*s.* According to which account, 25 pounds of gold amounts to the sum of 900*l.*

or through carelessness, they shall be punished by the judges; and if the judges, upon information of these officers, shall take no notice of it, but defer punishment, they themselves shall be fined 30 pound of gold, and their officers be liable to the same penalty. Given at Constantinople, November the 8th. Arcadius the second time, and Rufinus being Consuls." That is, anno 392.

This law struck down Paganism root and branch, so that it never recovered itself into any tolerable degree of life and power, they being now restrained not only from the grosser kinds of sacrifice, but from what had hitherto been permitted, as Libanius tells us,ⁱ the very burning incense, and perfuming their temples and altars. Theodosius lived about two years after this, and having routed and killed the tyrant Eugenius near Aquileia, died at Milan, February the 24th, anno 395, leaving the empire to his two sons Arcadius and Honorius, the former at seventeen years of age succeeding in the East, the other at eleven in the West.

VI. Together with the death of this great prince I might have shut up this *Saculum*, and indeed put a period to the whole discourse, but that upon his death the Gentiles seem to have resumed new hopes, whom therefore Arcadius about six months after debarred all use of temples or sacrifices,^j in any place, or at any time whatsoever, reviving all former penalties made against them, and making it capital for the officers to neglect their duties in this matter; as the next year he cancelled all privileges^k anciently granted to Pagan priests, of any order, or under any name or title whatsoever; adding, it was not reasonable they should enjoy the privilege, whose very profession was condemned by law. And now temples, the nests of idolatry and superstition, went down apace in all places of the East, the materials whereof Arcadius the year following gave towards repairing the highways, bridges, aqueducts, and public walls and buildings.^l And whereas in some places temples were left standing in the fields, for the encouragement and conveniency of the country people, he commanded even these to be quietly taken down,^m that so all foundation of superstition might be abolished: a law particularly procured by St. Chrysostom, with respect to the temples and idolatry of the heathens in Phœnicia, as we have noted in

ⁱ De Temp. p. 10.

^j Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 13.

^k Ibid. l. 14.

^l Ibid. lib. xv. Tit. i. l. 36.

^m Ibid. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 16.

his life. In the West things went not altogether to that height. Honorius forbade all sacrifices,ⁿ but commanded all ornaments of public buildings, such as statues and images to be preserved, and this, all laws made, or pretended to be made, to the contrary in anywise notwithstanding. About this time the council of Carthage petitioned Honorius,^o that all remainders of idolatry in Africa might be utterly abolished, and that the temples that stood in the fields, and in obscure private corners, where they could not be pretended to be for any public ornament, might be pulled down; that the Gentile feasts and entertainments, attended with profane and scandalous dancings, and whereat they sometimes constrained Christians to be present, and that upon the solemnities of the martyrs, might be prohibited; that their sports and shows exhibited in their theatres, might not be on the Lord's-day, or on any Christian solemnity, and that no Christian might be compelled to be there. In answer hereunto, the emperor enacted, by orders sent to Apollodorus proconsul of Africa, that as for temples, if not used to any unlawful purposes,^p they should stand entire, but if any man should do sacrifice in them, he should be punished according to law; and all idols that were abused to vain and foolish superstition, should by public officers be taken down: that as to their public feasts and meetings, the law had already forbidden all profane rites,^q but that their common meetings, their shows and entertainments of the people, should, according to ancient custom, be still suffered, provided it was done "without sacrifices, or any damnable superstition," as the words of the law are.

VII. And here the fourth century expires, beyond which, as there is no great occasion, so I shall not search far. Anno 401, Honorius granted the ground^r and buildings, heretofore belonging to temples, and which served to no more public use or ornament of the city, to the *curiales* and corporations, under several clauses and conditions. Seven years after, he ordered, that the corn usually paid to temples,^s should be taken away, and be bestowed upon the soldiery; that if any images were left

ⁿ Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 15.

^o Cod. Canon. Eccles. Afric. Can. lviii. lx. lxi. et Cap. xxv. xxvii. xxviii. p. 530, 531. vol. iv. Concill. ed. reg.

^p Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 18.

^q Ibid. l. 17.

^r Ibid. lib. xv. Tit. i. l. 41.

^s Ibid. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 19.

in temples, groves, or any other places, they should be removed; the temples themselves, whether in cities, villages, or in the open fields, be converted to public uses; those that stood within the emperor's patrimony, should be put to some convenient use; those within the possessions of private persons, to be destroyed; altars to be every where demolished; all Pagan feasts, sports, and solemnities, to be put down: that the bishops of the several places should have power to see this done, and a severe fine is set upon the head of all judges and officers that neglected the execution of it. That none that were enemies to the catholic church,^t should bear arms in any of the Palatine offices, nor be nearly employed under the prince, who refused to be of the same faith and religion with him; a law that equally struck at heathens and heretics. The next year he banished the *matici*,^u that is, all *aruspices*, magicians, &c. out of Rome, and all other cities, unless they would bring the books of their curious arts, and burn them in the presence of the bishop of that place, and engage never to return to their old errors again. Theodosius the younger, who had some years since succeeded his father in the Eastern empire, anno 416, made Gentiles incapable of bearing arms,^w or being admitted to places of honour and authority. And seven years after he speaks of Pagans,^x as if there were none left, *Pagani qui supersunt, quanquam jam nullos esse credamus*, &c., and that if there were, the former laws should be revived against them; and if any of them should be caught at their accursed sacrifices, though the law made it capital, it should be punished however with banishment and confiscation. Anno 426, he once more forbad all Pagan oblations,^y sacrifices, with all their rites and mysteries; and if any of their temples, chapels, or consecrated places were yet standing, the magistrate should take care to strip them of their superstitious use, and expiate them by placing a cross, the venerable ensign of the Christian religion in them; and that if any were proved guilty of having thus sacrificed before a competent judge, he should forfeit his life. This it seems was a parting blow, nor do we meet with any thing farther concerning these matters in the imperial laws of these times, nor indeed is any thing considerable to be found in history. For partly by the clear light and conviction of the

^t Ibid. Tit. v. l. 42. vid. Zosim. l. v. c. 46. ^u Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. Tit. xvi. l. 12.

^w Ibid. lib. xvi. Tit. x. l. 21.

^x Ibid. l. 22, 23.

^y Ibid. l. 25.

Christian doctrine, every where plainly and constantly preached, partly by the force and severity of the laws of the empire, heathenism dwindled into nothing, and that little that was left crept into holes and corners to hide its head, according to the prediction long since of the prophet Isaiah, that “the idols should utterly be abolished, and should go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, and that men should cast their idols of silver and of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles, and to the bats;” fit company for such blind idolaters. And thus we have seen how Paganism ebbed and flowed in the reign of the several princes, after Christianity became the religion of the empire, until it was quite beaten out of doors. The effects of which whole account, I shall sum up in the words of Theodoret.² “Constantine the Great, (says he,) a prince worthy of all honourable commendation, and who first adorned the imperial throne with piety, when he saw the world running mad after idolatry, expressly forbid that any should sacrifice to Demons; their temples indeed he did not pull down, but only commanded them to be shut up. His sons came after, and trod in their father’s steps; but Julian revived Paganism, and added new fuel to old errors and impieties. To him succeeded Jovian, who again prohibited the worship of idols. The elder Valentinian governed the West, according to the same rules and measures; while Valens in the East permitted indeed all others to worship and adore what they had a mind to, but constantly persecuted those (and those only) who held to the catholic and apostolic doctrine. All his time the altars smoked with incense, and the Gentiles undisturbedly brought their sacrifices and drink offerings to their images, and kept their public feasts in the open market place. The priests and votaries of Bacchus, clad in goats’ skins, ran up and down, tearing dogs in pieces, howling and making dreadful noises, and behaving themselves in the most wild and frantic manner, with the rest of those mad ceremonies, wherewith they were wont to celebrate the festival of their deity: all which, the most religious prince Theodosius, when he came to the empire, did utterly extirpate and abolish, and drave them into an eternal silence.”

² Lib. v. c. 21.

THE LIFE OF EUSEBIUS, BISHOP OF CÆSAREA IN PALESTINE.

The time and place of his birth. His kindred unknown. His first studies. His intimacy with Pamphilus and others. The Diocletian Persecution when begun. Its fierceness in Palestine. Pamphilus cast into prison. His and Eusebius's joint studies there. Their apology for Origen. Pamphilus's trial and martyrdom. His learning and great charity. Eusebius's journey into Egypt. The great severity of the persecution in those parts. His imprisonment there. Vindicated from the charge of offering sacrifice. His writing against Hierocles. Hierocles who, and what his books against the Christians. These books answered by Eusebius; and this proved to be our Eusebius. His being made bishop of Cæsarea, and the eminency of that see. His oration at the dedication of the church at Tyre. The Lycinian persecution. The Arian controversy. His interceding with Alexander of Alexandria, in behalf of Arius, and his letter to that purpose. The synod of Nice. Eusebius's honourable place and employment in that council; his explication of that place, "The Lord created me," &c. His letter to the people of Cæsarea, about the affairs of the Nicene synod, the creed, the explication of the articles, and his subscription to them. Some brief remarks upon that epistle. Constantine's letter to him about the rebuilding of churches, and his care for the destruction of idolatry. Eusebius's letter to the empress Constantia, concerning the image of our Saviour. His Chronicon, what, and when written. His Ecclesiastic History and books *De locis Hebraicis*. His commentaries *De Preparatione and Demonstratione Evangelica*. The time of their being written stated. The synod at Antioch, and deposition of Eustathius. Eusebius's refusal of that see, and commendation from the emperor upon that account. The dedication of Constantinople. The emperor's letter to Eusebius, to provide bibles for the new erected churches there. The council at Tyre. Eusebius's rude treatment there by Potamo, bishop of Heraclea. The dedication of the magnificent church of the sepulchre at Jerusalem. Eusebius's orations upon that occasion. His book of the description of that church. His oration *De laudibus Constantini*, where, and upon what occasion. His writing against Marcellus, when, and why. Marcellus, who. The death of Constantine, and his character. Eusebius's books *De vita Constantini*, and the design of them. Eusebius's death, and successor. His admirable learning, and excellent works. His collecting church-antiquities, and how qualified for it. His style, and Photius's censure of it. The charge of Arianism heavily laid upon him. An attempt towards his vindication by a general apology, and by many particular passages out of his writings. Who his apologists among the ancients. Condemned by the second Nicene council, and why. The characters given him, and honours done him in the Western church. The moderate censure of pope Pelagius. Baronius's particular pique against him,

whence. The story of Constantine's being baptized at Nicomedia considered. The truth of Eusebius's relation justified against Baronius. What allowance to be made for the harsh expressions in Eusebius's works. His writings enumerated.

DIONYSIUS bishop of Alexandria, (that we may thence commence our design in this, where we concluded the foregoing *sæculum*) died anno Imp. Gallieni 12, Chr. 266, immediately after the first council held at Antioch, wherein the irregular doctrines and practices of Paulus Samosatenus bishop of that church, were discussed and censured. About this time Eusebius was born, whence entering upon the affairs of that council, he calls it τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς γενεάν,^a "his own age;" and elsewhere affirms, that Dionysius lived in his time.^b That he was born in Palestine there can be no doubt, the ancients generally giving him that title, and himself calling it *his own*,^c or his native home. The particular place of his nativity, though it cannot certainly, may with greatest probability be assigned to Cæsarea, where we meet with the first notice of him, and to which he maintained a constant relation to his dying day. Who, or what his parents and relations were, is unknown. Nicephorus makes him sister's son to Pamphilus the martyr,^d I believe upon no other warrant, than the great intimacy that was between them. They who conceive him to have been brother to Eusebius,^e bishop of Nicomedia, do it upon the authority of Arius, who so styles him in his letter to that bishop.^f This conjecture (were the evidence sufficient) I should be inclinable enough to embrace, as what would give us a probable account, how he came to be so favourable to that party. But whoever impartially considers the matter, will see reason to think, that Arius intended no more than that he was his brother in the episcopal order, or in some other collateral respect. Sure I am, the Nicomedian Eusebius in his letter to Paulinus of Tyre,^g written immediately upon the receipt of that of Arius, gives him no other title than that of Δεσπότης, my lord, or master; besides that I believe it unprecedented in the records of those times, for two own brothers to have only one and the same name. His younger years were entirely consecrated to arts and learning, to philosophy and severer studies;

^a Hist. Eccles. l. vii. c. 26.

^b Lib. iii. c. 28.

^c Orat. de Laud. Const. c. 11.

^d Hist. Eccles. l. vi. c. 37.

^e Vales. Pref. in Euseb. Hist. Eccles.

^f Apud Theodor. Hist. Eccles. l. i. c. 5.

^g Ap. Theodor. *ibid.* c. 6.

wherein he became as great a master, as any of the age he lived in. What tutors he had in the rudiments of the Christian faith we find not, more than that he was sometimes an auditor of Dorotheus,^h presbyter of Antioch, (he flourished under Cyril, who entered upon that see Ann. Chr. 279;) one whom for his excellent parts, profound learning, and exemplary virtues, Diocletian himself had in great reverence and estimation, and had made him his commissioner for the trade of purple-dying at Tyre.

II. Theotecnus bishop of Cæsarea dying, Agapius succeeded in that see,ⁱ a man prudent and diligent in his charge, and of a very kind and charitable temper: by him Pamphilus was ordained presbyter of that church, and it is like not long after Eusebius himself. Between which two commenced so great a dearness and league of friendship, that, as St. Hierom says,^j they seem to have had but one soul between them; and Eusebius, to perpetuate the memory of so dear a friendship, assumed the name of Pamphilus, a title which he carries to this day. Besides him, two more he mentions of his familiar acquaintance,^k Pierius presbyter of Alexandria, and regent of the catechetic school there, who had sometime been Pamphilus's master, one whose strict life and singular learning in all faculties gained him the title of a *second* Origen; and Meletius bishop of Sebastea in Pontus, a good man, and of incomparable learning; and so extraordinarily eloquent, that he was commonly styled τὸ μέλι τῆς Ἀττικῆς, "the Attic honey;" whose excellent converse Eusebius enjoyed, while for seven years together he sheltered himself in Palestine during the following persecution. Indeed as yet the state of the church was serene and calm, and the sun shone very favourably upon them; they lived undisturbed, and securely enjoyed the liberty of their religion;^l many of them in favour at court, and some admitted to great offices in the empire, the bishops and ministers of religion highly honoured by all, even by them that were strangers to the faith; Christianity daily increased by numerous converts, old churches were repaired, and new ones erected more large and stately in every place. Thus

^h Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 32.

ⁱ Id. *ibid.*

^j Epist. xli. ad Pammach. et Ocean. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 347.

^k Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 32. Phot. Cod. CXVIII.

^l Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. viii. c. 1.

stood the case with them, till their sins awakened the divine justice, and provoked it to let loose the storm upon them.

III. About the entrance of the following century, Diocletian having routed and killed Achilleus, governor of Egypt, (who had usurped the empire, drawn those parts into rebellion, and fortified himself in Alexandria,) returned for Syria, and passed through Palestine with young prince Constantine in his company, at what time Eusebius tells us,^m he saw that young prince, when the eyes and admirations of men were fixed upon him, his tall and comely personage, the strength and firmness of his body, but especially the virtues and endowments of his mind, giving an early omen of the happiness of his future reign. Not long after, Diocletian, together with his colleague Maximian, entered Rome in a solemn triumph for the several victories which had of late been gained over the barbarous countries; which done, he returned to Nicomedia, where he usually kept his court. And now he began to think it an affront and disparagement to his other triumphs, to see the ancient religion of the empire baffled and borne down by Christianity, and therefore resolved to attempt the suppression, if not extirpation of it. To this purpose imperial edicts are issued out;ⁿ by the first commanding their churches to be demolished, their bibles to be burnt, persons of honour to be disgracefully turned out of their offices, and meaner persons to lose their liberty; by a second, that the governors of the church should be imprisoned, and by all methods of cruelty and torment be compelled to sacrifice; which were shortly after followed by fresh orders more fierce and bloody than the other. This persecution began a little before Easter, anno 303, and with what fury it raged through all the provinces of the Eastern empire, Eusebius has declared at large.^o We shall only remark a few of those that suffered in Palestine, and especially at Cæsarea, where Eusebius resided, and was a sad spectator of their sufferings. The first that came to trial was Procopius, who obstinately refusing to do sacrifice to the gods,^p was immediately beheaded at Cæsarea; followed herein not long after by Alphæus and Zaccheus in the same way of martyrdom, and at the same place; as on the same day with them, Romanus, deacon

^m De vit. Const. l. i. c. 19.

ⁿ Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. viii. c. 2.

^o Ibid. fere per tot. lib.

^p De Mart. Palest. c. 1.

and exorcist of the church of Cæsarea, suffered at Antioch. The next year was memorable for the martyrdom of Timotheus at Gaza;^q of Timolaus, Dionysius, Romulus, Agapius, and several others beheaded at Cæsarea. And now it was that Diocletian, either weary of the pompous cares of greatness, or vexed to see himself baffled by the constancy of Christians, laid down his purple, and betook himself to the retirements of a private life. But alas, the scene hereby did not lose, but only shift its actor. For Maximinus, who succeeded in that part of the empire, carried on the same design with a fresh, but more violent, rage and cruelty, issuing out orders the following year to quicken the governors of provinces, in putting the laws in strict execution against those that refused to comply with the public rites and ceremonies of their religion: to which purpose, while the officers were making proclamation at Cæsarea,^r and summoning men by name out of a public roll, Apphianus, a young gentleman of Lycia, and at that time scholar to Eusebius, stole out of doors, (unknown to us, says Eusebius, who lived in the same house with him,) and pressing through the crowds and guards, caught hold on the hand of Urbanus the president, then ready to offer sacrifice, which he grasped so hard as forced him to let it fall, gravely reproving him for those impieties. Whereupon (as we may imagine) the severest torments became his portion, after all which he was thrown half dead into the sea, his brother Ædesius for the same fact suffering the same kind of martyrdom, and almost at the same time at Alexandria, not to mention what happened in other places.

IV. It was now the fourth year of the persecution, when Maximinus the emperor came in person to Cæsarea,^s there to solemnize his birth-day, which was accordingly celebrated with infinite variety of pomps and shows. But all had been nothing, if some Christian had not borne part in the triumphs of that day. Accordingly Agapius, who had been sometime since sentenced to wild beasts, was brought forth into the amphitheatre, and nothing prevailed with by the emperor's promises, was delivered over to the mercy of a she-bear, who only left him so much life, as to be able to survive till the next day, when great stones being tied to his feet, he was thrown into the sea. Not long after, Eusebius's dear friend Pamphilus was apprehended,^t and

^q De Mart. Palest. c. 3.^r Id. *ibid.* c. 4.^s Id. *ibid.* c. 6.^t Id. *ibid.* c. 7.

brought before Urbanus the president, who endeavoured, by all the arts both of insinuation and terror, to bring him over. But all in vain: the martyr remained immoveable, and generously despised his threatenings; which so enraged the governor, that he commanded him to be racked with the acutest tortures: and when they had more than once racked his sides, and torn off his flesh with iron pincers, and yet that all this did not shake the firmness of his mind, he was sent to keep company with the other confessors in prison, the president himself being immediately after disgracefully turned out of his office, and with shame enough condemned by the emperor to die. But it was not at all the disgrace and torment Pamphilus endured, could fright Eusebius from his friend; he visited him in prison, and diligently ministered to his occasions, and there they mutually employed their time and pains to excellent and useful purposes. And as heretofore they had published the Greek translation of the Septuagint,^u taken out of Origen's Hexapla, for the use of the Palestine churches; so now they composed an elaborate Apology in defence of Origen, to vindicate him from those rude censures and reflections, which the hasty and indiscreet zeal of some had made upon his memory. It is true, St. Jerome (forgetting what he had elsewhere said concerning this matter^v) more than once peremptorily denies that Pamphilus either wrote this or any other book.^x But Eusebius himself, who knew best, expressly tells us,^y that it was the result of their joint endeavours; and Photius more particularly,^z that the whole work consisted of six books; the five first whereof were finished by Pamphilus in prison with Eusebius's assistance; the sixth added by Eusebius, after the other's martyrdom, and that it was designed for the consolation of the martyrs who laboured in the mines, the chief of whom was Paternuthius, who shortly after was burnt at the stake.

V. Two full years Pamphilus continued in prison, when Firmilian, Urban's successor,^a brought him to his fatal trial. It happened that five Christians of Egypt, out of a great reverence to the martyrs, had accompanied some confessors that were

^u Hieron. pref. in Paralip. vol. i. p. 1023.

^v De Script. Eccl. in Pamph.

^x Epist. xlii. ad Pammach. et Ocean. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 347. Apol. adv. Rufin. l. i. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 357. et l. ii. p. 419.

^y Hist. Eccl. l. vi. c. 23.

^z Cod. CXVIII.

^a De Mart. Palest. c. 11.

condemned to the mines in Cilicia; and being now upon their return, took Cæsarea in their way, where they were apprehended by the watch that stood sentinel at the gates, to whom freely confessing what they were, they were immediately carried before the governor, and by his command laid in irons. The next day they were again brought before him, and Pamphilus also with his companions commanded to attend the tribunal. What became of the Egyptian martyrs, we are not now concerned to inquire: it came at last to Pamphilus's turn, whom the judge knowing to be of an invincible constancy and resolution, only asked of him, whether he would yet comply. And having received both from him and his fellows nothing but a flat denial, the last doom was passed upon them. But between sentence and execution, in steps Porphyrius, Pamphilus's servant, a young man of good parts and learning, not above eighteen years of age, and boldly requests that the bodies of the dead might receive decent sepulture. But he paid dear for his forward zeal, the tormentors being commanded to exercise all their faculties upon him, who raked off his flesh, till they had laid bare the most inward recesses of his body, all which he endured with a most incomparable patience; after which being ordered to be burnt, he sucked in the flames at a distance, entertaining his friends during the whole scene of his tragedy, with a most serene undisturbed mind, till his soul mounted up, leading his master the way to heaven, who shortly followed after him. But the rage of their enemies died not with them, the president commanding their dead bodies to be kept by a military guard four days and nights together, that none daring to fetch them off, they might remain a prey to wild beasts. But when beyond all expectation neither bird nor beast of prey came near to touch them, (the providence of God defeating the malice of men,) they were permitted to be decently interred. Thus have we brought Pamphilus to his grave, a man of great learning, but far greater piety. He was a Phœnician,^b of no inconsiderable birth and fortunes, born at Berytus, a city famous for the study of the Roman laws, where he bore some secular offices in his younger years, and where being educated under all the advantages of human arts, he next applied himself to the study of divine things, and was then made presbyter of Cæsarea. He was indefa-

^b S. Metaphr. in Mart. Pamp. ap. Sur. ad 1. Jun. n. 2. et 5. ex Euseb.

tigable in the pursuit of all parts of learning, especially the knowledge of the scriptures, for which end he erected a library at Cæsarea,^c and replenished it with books from all parts, yea, in a great measure of his own writing, transcribing the far greatest part of Origen's works with his own hand, which he there laid up, and which were extant in St. Jerome's time, which he tells us he valued as a most inestimable treasure. His life was truly strict and philosophical, his soul humble and mortified,^d eminent his contempt of the world, and his charity to the poor, whom he relieved wherever he met, and by the truest sort of charity provided for their souls, that they might not be destitute of the bread of life. And for this purpose he caused great numbers of bibles to be copied out, which he always kept by him, and freely bestowed upon any, whose piety made them as willing to read them, as their purses made them unable to procure them.

VI. Eusebius thus deprived of his dear companion, either to mitigate the sense of so great a loss, or to withdraw from the present heat of the persecution, or, it may be, despatched upon some affairs of the church, left Cæsarea, and about this time, (for I cannot well place it sooner,) retired into Egypt,^e where he found the persecution so far from abating, that it increased together with the heats of the climate, especially in the parts about Thebais, where he tells us he daily beheld the most sad and dismal spectacles; many were raked to death with sharp shells instead of pincers to tear off the flesh, women naked tied by one of their legs and hoisted up on high by engines prepared for that purpose; others tied by the feet to great boughs of trees, violently wrested and forced together, which being let go, in a moment rent the bodies of the martyrs all in pieces. Nor were the numbers less considerable, than the cruelties of their execution, twenty, thirty, sixty, sometimes a hundred in a day; some beheaded, others burnt, till the very edges of their swords were dulled, and the tormentors themselves, though relieving one another, tired out. All which time they discovered not only the highest constancy, but the most impatient desire of martyrdom, sentence being no sooner passed upon the first, but others imme-

^c Hieron. de Script. in Matt. et in Pamphil. et ad Princip. in Psal. 126. vid. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. vi. c. 32.

^d Euseb. de vit. Pamph. l. iii. ap. Hier. Apol. adv. Rufin. l. i. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 358, 9.

^e Hist. Eccl. l. viii. c. 9.

diately crowded up to the tribunal, confessing they were Christians. During his residence in these parts, Eusebius was seized and thrown into prison: but how long he remained there, or by what means he was delivered thence, we nowhere find; which has created a suspicion with many, improved by others into a confident assertion, that he offered sacrifice, and basely complied with his persecutors to procure his escape. This indeed was charged upon him by the Egyptian confessors,^f and particularly by Potamo bishop of Heraclea, his fellow-prisoner. But then it is to be considered, that they who suggested this were his avowed enemies, who looking upon him as a champion of the Arian party, were willing to improve all rumours and jealousies, though never so slight and groundless, to his disadvantage; and that there seems to have been no other foundation for this suspicion, (as Potamo plainly confesses,) than merely his being released out of prison without those badges of ignominy and cruelty upon his body which some other of the confessors underwent. Not to say, that had it been as they suggested, it would have been an insuperable bar to his after-preferment in the church, it being the severe discipline of those days not to admit any of the lapsed to places of dignity and authority in the church; and where any such had done sacrifice, they were immediately stripped of their ecclesiastical capacities, and, though penitent, were received to no more than a mere lay-communion; and Athanasius himself tells us of Asterius the Cappadocian sophist,^g that having sacrificed to idols under this very persecution, he could not for that reason be admitted into the order of the clergy. Whence I cannot but note the disingenuous and uncharitable censure of Baronius,^h who, as he falls upon Eusebius at every turn, so in this positively affirms, not only that he did actually sacrifice, and was interdicted the communion of the faithful, but that it is highly probable that he procured the presidency of so noble a church as Cæsarea,ⁱ by sinister and evil arts, as to which he could not be regularly admitted by the constitutions of the church. In which malicious insinuation had there been any truth, we should not have failed to have heard

^f Epist. Synod. Alex. ap. Athan. Apol. contra Arianos. s. 3. et Epiph. Hæres. lxxviii. c. 7.

^g De Synod. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 18. vid. Socrat. l. ii. c. 36.

^h Ad An. 308. n. 22.

ⁱ Ad An. 318. n. 79.

of it in the writers of those times, when the zealous contentions of the several parties ripped up whatever might make to the disgrace of either.

VII. The persecution in the mean time was carried on in Egypt, with all imaginable vigour and fierceness, by the care of two zealous governors, Culcianus of Thebais, and Hierocles of Alexandria. This Hierocles had been sometime since judge at Nicomedia in Bithynia, where Diocletian kept his court, and where Lactantius at that time taught rhetoric, and for his activity, especially against the Christians, was, it is like, preferred to be governor of Alexandria, for so Epiphanius expressly styles him; where he carried it with so high a hand against the Christians, and prosecuted the martyrs with such intolerable severities, that Ædesius, in a fit of indiscreet and immoderate zeal, not only reprov'd,^k but struck him on the face. A man he was of wit and parts above the ordinary standard, but poisoned with inveterate prejudices against the Christians, whom he persecuted both with his sword and pen. For he wrote two books,^l which in imitation of Celsus's *λόγος ἀληθής*, he entitled *λόγοι φιλαλήθεις πρὸς Χριστιάνους*, as if not so much written against, as addressed to the Christians, that by a sly insinuation he might the easilier recommend himself to them; wherein he attempted to prove the scriptures to be guilty of falsehood and contradiction, so particularly examining every minute punctilio, that Lactantius was ready to suspect him to have been an apostate Christian; the apostles he endeavoured to shew to have been cheats and impostors, rude and illiterate persons, and our Saviour himself a public robber, that his miracles were the effects of magic, not comparable with those of Apollonius Tyaneus, whom he equalled with, and preferred before him. This book Eusebius took to task, and waiving all other parts of it, as himself tells us,^m (partly because being transcribed to a tittle of other men's writings, I suppose he means Celsus or Porphyry, they had been already answered by Origen; partly because he himself designed to examine them elsewhere, as he did in his books against Porphyry afterwards,) he now only attacked that part of the *φιλαλήθης* wherein Hierocles had compared Apollonius with our Saviour, which he refuted by no other method, than by making some

^k Vid. Men. Græc. τῆ β'. τοῦ Ἀπριλλ.

^l Lactant. lib. v. c. 2, 3.

^m Contr. Hierocl. non long. ab init.

strict reflections upon the life of Apollonius, described by Phylotratus in eight books, all which he runs through with short remarks, shewing Apollonius to be so unfit to be compared with our blessed Saviour, that he scarce deserved the name of a true philosopher, or an honest man. I confess I find one,ⁿ (a man otherwise learned and judicious,) standing alone in this matter, peremptorily denying, that it was our Eusebius that wrote this confutation of Hierocles, but rather one of a later date, as seems evident from Hierocles's books concerning Fate, which were not written till near a whole age after. But this objection would have easily vanished, had he considered, what to me is most plain and evident, that our Hierocles could not be the author of those seven books concerning Fate and Providence, as wherein mention is made of Plutarch the Athenian,^o who flourished about the beginning of the fifth century, and was contemporary with Olympiodorus, to whose judgment and censure he submitted those books,^p and who dedicated his Roman History^q (for that it was the same Olympiodorus I make no question) to the younger Theodosius, who began not his reign till the year 408. Those books therefore belong to a younger Hierocles mentioned by Suidas^r and others, to whom he ascribes them, as also the most excellent Commentary upon the Golden Verses of Pythagoras. That which betrayed the man into the mistake, was plainly this: he supposed Eusebius's dissertation against Hierocles concerning Fate,^s to have been in answer to those seven upon that subject mentioned by Photius. Whenas Eusebius in that discourse has not the least relation to those books, but only makes some brief animadversions upon Apollonius's principles concerning fate, which he annexes as a suitable appendage to the preceding confutation, as is evident at first sight beyond all exception to any one that casts his eye upon that discourse. After all which it were easy to justify our Eusebius's title to this book from the express testimony of Photius,^t and the faith of all ancient copies, which bear his name in the front of them. But of this enough.

VIII. It is now high time to return with Eusebius into Palestine, where the persecution ceased, Anno Chr. 310, eight

ⁿ J. Jons, de script. Hist. Philos. l. iii. c. 13.

^p Id. *ibid.*

^q Id. Cod. LXXX.

^s J. Jons, de script. Hist. Philos. l. iii. c. 13.

^o Phot. Cod. CCXIV.

^r Suid. in verb. *Ἱεροκλ.*

^t Cod. XXXIX.

years after it began, as within two years after the weather cleared up in all the provinces of the East,^u Constantine the Great, after his memorable victory over Maxentius at the Milvian bridge, declaring himself in favour of the Christians, and writing in their behalf to Maximinus, who not daring to control the request of so potent a colleague, issued out his letters to the governors of provinces, forbidding all rigorous prosecution of them. About this time died Agapius, bishop of Cæsarea, in whose room none was thought so fit to succeed as Eusebius, whose admirable learning, eminent services, and peculiar relation to that church, recommended him to the government of so famous and renowned a see. Cæsarea, so called by Herod the Great, who beautified and enlarged it, in honour of Augustus Cæsar, had ever since been one of the greatest cities in those parts, and from the fall of Jerusalem it had been the seat of the proconsul, and the metropolis of the province; a place not more celebrated for its abundance and plenty,^x than for the neatness and elegancy of its buildings. And as the fortunes of the church in such cases usually arise with the splendour and greatness of the civil state, it had been the metropolitan see of Palestine,^y to which even Jerusalem itself was subject. And though the fathers of the Nicene synod thought fit to decree, that according to ancient custom and tradition,^z honour should be paid to the bishop of Jerusalem, yet still it was with a reservation, saving the rights, the power and jurisdiction of its own metropolis; by which they undoubtedly mean Cæsarea, as the scholiasts upon that canon universally acknowledge, and is, I think, granted by all. And thus stood the case for some ages, till the ambition of some bishops, and the great reverence which after-times bore to the place of our Saviour's sufferings and burial, turned the tables, and Cæsarea became subject to the patriarchate of Jerusalem.

IX. Eusebius, placed in so conspicuous a throne, quickly became considerable among the bishops of the East, but with none more intimate than Paulinus, bishop of Tyre, formerly presbyter of Antioch, at whose invitation he performed a very solemn service upon this occasion. Among the happy influences of Constantine's favour and kindness to the Christians, it was not the least, that

^u Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. ix. c. 9.

^x Vid. descrip. orb. Gothofr. p. 12.

^y Balsam. in Can. vi. Concil. Nic. Zonar. et Arist. in Can. vii. Matth. Blys. sub lit. E. c. 11.

^z Can. vii.

the houses of God, which the impiety of the late times had demolished, began to rise up out of their dust and ruins, and to grow up into fairer and more magnificent fabrics than before; and this not only by the emperors' leave, but by their particular encouragement and assistance. Nor were churches more cheerfully built by the bounty of Christians, than with an equal piety they were solemnly dedicated to God's honour and service; the consecrations being usually celebrated with prayers and sermons, hymns and sacraments, and all possible expression of mutual love and charity, the presence of the governors of the church, and resort of strangers from all parts: in which number Paulinus of Tyre, partly by his own, partly by the contribution of his friends, had erected a beautiful and stately church, the fairest in all those parts; at the dedication whereof, there being a general confluence of the neighbour bishops, Eusebius had the honour to make that large and elegant oration, yet extant in the body of his history;^a wherein, after a grateful commemoration of the care and goodness of the Divine Providence, that had so strangely turned their tears and sorrows into music and triumphs; and especially that the solemnities of their religion, and the places of divine worship had been with advantage restored to them; and had therein recommended the piety and diligence of the bishop of that place; he particularly describes the several parts and ornaments of that magnificent structure, together with their mystical aspects and significations, concluding, as he began, with a passionate address to all, to join unanimously in a hearty love and admiration of the divine goodness; and honour and veneration suitable to those mighty blessings that had been heaped upon them. This was done anno 314, or at most the following year. But, alas, this pleasant serenity of affairs lasted not long. Licinius the Eastern emperor laying aside the mask of his dissembled kindness to the Christians,^b by which he had hitherto imposed upon Constantine, fell now with great severity upon them, not only banishing them from court, and all offices of trust and power, but pursuing them with cruel edicts, proceeding against their estates and persons, by oppression and violence, by rapine and confiscation, by exile and imprisonment, and by the most bloody and barbarous kinds of death and torment. The Gentile religion he industriously revived, and eu-

^a Hist. Eccl. l. x. c. 4.

^b Ibid. c. 8.

deavoured to restore it not only to life, but to its ancient power and splendour. This opportunity Valesius supposes Eusebius took to write his books,^c *De Præparatione et Demonstratione Ecangelica*; as indeed the occasion was very fit and proper. But that they could not be written till several years after this, we shall shew afterwards.

X. But though the Licinian tempest was fierce and boisterous, yet arose there at this time a storm of another nature, that in some respects was more troublesome to the church than all the Pagan persecutions. I mean the Arian controversy, whereof we shall speak more particularly in the Life of Athanasius, the proper seat of that story, considering it here no farther than as Eusebius was concerned in it. Arius, like a subtle and designing man, had by couching his mind in ambiguous terms, and denying at one time what he affirmed at another, so concealed the venom of his propositions, that he so far imposed upon several bishops of the East, and particularly upon our Eusebius, as to write to Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, Arius's diocesan, by whom he had been excommunicated, to readmit him to communion. What use the crafty heretic made of these letters is easy to imagine, insomuch that Alexander looked upon himself as under a necessity by public letters to represent the true state of the case; and in one to Alexander of Byzantium,^d he charges the three Syrian bishops (meaning, no question, Eusebius of Cæsarea, Theodotus of Laodicea, and Paulinus of Tyre) as giving too much countenance and encouragement to the Arian party, declaring that Arius and all his followers were expelled the church, and that no man ought to receive or entertain them. This, Arius in his epistle to the Nicomedian Eusebius interprets,^e as particularly putting our Eusebius and several others under an anathema, as whom he supposed of the same opinion with himself. Eusebius, nettled hereat, writes to Alexander,^f telling him, "That his letters had wronged Arius and his followers, when they charged them with affirming, that the Son, like other things, was made out of things that were not; whenas they produced their own letters written to himself, containing an account of their faith, wherein they expressly declare, that the God of the Old and New Testament had from eternal ages begotten his

^c Præfat. de vit. et script. Euseb.

^d Ap. Theodor. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 4.

^e Ibid. c. 5.

^f Ext. fragm. literar. Act. vi. Concil. Nicen. ii.

only begotten Son; by whom he made the world and all things therein; and that he begot him not seemingly, but truly and really, unchangeable, immutable, the perfect production of God, (for so I presume to render *κτίσμα τοῦ Θεοῦ*;) but not as one of the creatures." More he has there to the same purpose, to shew how much Alexander had misrepresented them, and possibly the case had been much clearer, had the epistle been entire; though by what of it is now extant, one would think, either that the Arian principles were not so thick and gross as their enemies represented them, or that they rendered them more specious and plausible at first sight, in which some men of moderate and unprejudiced minds were willing to understand them. This I should be ready enough to believe, but that in the close of that epistle (here mentioned by Eusebius, but extant entire both in Athanasius and Epiphanius) they seem plainly to retract what before they had granted: which it may be Eusebius never saw; if he did, he had kinder thoughts of them than they did deserve. Alexander, nothing mollified, kept firm to his resolutions,^g whereupon Arius despatched away messengers to our Eusebius, Paulinus of Tyre, and Patrophilus bishop of Scythopolis, begging, that by their countenance and assistance, he, and those of his party, might, as they had been wont, assemble their people, and exercise their ministeries in their several parish-churches. The matter being canvassed in a meeting of the Palestine bishops, they agreed to the request, affirming, that they might do so, but that withal they should yield submission to their bishop, and unweariedly solicit and importune him, that they might be received to peace and communion with him.

XI. The controversy being grown beyond all private methods of composure, Constantine, Ann. Chr. 325, summoned a general council of bishops from most parts of the Christian world for the decision of it, which accordingly met at Nice, where our Eusebius had the first seat on the right wing of the benches near the emperor,^h and the honour to entertain him with an oration in the name of the synod at his coming thither. This was that oration that he made at Constantine's *vicennalia*, when, as he tells us,ⁱ he beheld that great conqueror compassed round with the ser-

^g Sozom. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 15.

^h De vit. Const. l. iii. c. 11. Sozom. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 19. ⁱ De vit. Const. l. i. c. 1.

vants of God, and displayed the goodness of heaven, and the greatness of the emperor, with just praises and commendations: a piece of service not more acceptable to that prince than honourable to himself. Indeed how considerable a part he bore in that great assembly, may appear by what the historian of that council reports,^k (though I confess not mentioned by any other,) that when one of the philosophers whom Arius had brought along with him to dispute on his side, pressed that place, *Κύριος ἐκτίσέ με*, “The Lord created me the beginning of his ways,” as plainly destructive of our Lord’s divinity, Eusebius was commanded by the synod to undertake him upon that argument, who, waiving the usual explications of that place, insists upon this, that this is not spoken in the person of the Son of God, but of that *λογιστικὴ σοφία*, that human and rational wisdom, which God at first planted in man, when he created him after his own image. And because he foresaw it would be objected, that the wisdom here spoken of was before the rest of the creation, he affirms, that the material world was indeed actually made before it, but that this wisdom and man, as the subject of it, were first in the purpose and design of God. The particulars of the dispute are too tedious to be here inserted. He concludes with an address to the philosopher, not to suffer himself to be led aside out of the common road of the apostolic faith, to apply his mind to truth, without respect to hatred or parties, by which means he would quickly understand that the Son of God was not a creature, but the very maker and founder of the whole creation. Among many things that induce me to disbelieve the account of these disputations, and particularly of this passage of Eusebius, this is not the least, the odd interpretation which Eusebius here gives of this so much controverted place. For though the Greek fathers, who generally understood no Hebrew, were frequently at a loss about it, as it lies in the version of the Septuagint, the only translation they made use of, yet Eusebius, who was somewhat skilled in the original text, was capable of giving a more easy and natural solution of it. And accordingly elsewhere we find him expounding it of the Son of God,^l and expressly asserting, that if it were meant of creating, it could not be understood, as if he had proceeded from not being into being, seeing he did subsist and live, was pre-

^k Gel. Cyz. Hist. Conc. Nic. l. ii. c. 18.

^l Contr. Marcel. l. iii. c. 2.

existent and presubsistent to the whole creation, but rather that it might denote, that God had appointed and constituted him to be prince and head of all things; that the Hebrew text had nothing concerning God's creating him, the word *cana* signifying to possess; and so he observes both Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion render it, "the Lord possessed me the beginning of his ways," that is, he whom the Father begot as his only begotten Son, was the head of all things that were made, both visible and invisible, both as to their creation and salvation; that there was a wide difference between *ἔκτισε* "created," and *ἐκτήσατο* "possessed," the one noting after the ordinary manner of creation, a proceeding from non-existence into a state of being, the other a possessing something pre-existent, and a most peculiarly distinguishing propriety towards him that possesses it: so that the Son of God in that place at once represents both his own pre-existence and peculiar propriety to his Father, and also that benefit and advantage which his Father's works would receive by his providence and administration: which is the sum, and as near as may be the very words, of what he more largely discourses upon this subject.

XII. Great were the pains which the fathers of the council took to convince Arius and his party, and to satisfy the doubtful and the scrupulous, the moderate endeavouring to find out some expedient to heal the breach: to which end Eusebius brought in a confession of faith, wherein he hoped both parties might agree, which, though well approved of, yet not being thought explicit enough in the main article, was with some little alteration and addition, especially of the *τὸ ὁμοούσιον*, or word "consubstantial," drawn up into a standing creed. This form Eusebius at first disliked, and very minutely canvassed and debated the matter, but considering how much the peace of the church ought to overrule all private sentiments and niceties about words, he the next day subscribed the common creed.^m Of all which he gave an account in a letter to the people of his charge, (though, as Theodoret thinks, it was more particularly designed to give satisfaction to some persons in that city, deeply leavened with Arian principles, and who seemed to challenge him as having betrayed and given up their cause. The letter is somewhat larger than ordinary, and consists of expressions not very

^m Athan. de decret. syn. Nic. s. 3. Epist. ad Afric. s. 6.

capable of being properly rendered into our language; yet because it contains the transactions of that synod, so far as they relate to him, we shall here insert it:ⁿ

Eusebius's letter to the people of Cæsarea.

“ Though I doubt not, dear brethren, but that before this you have heard by some other hand, what things have been debated concerning the faith of the church in the great council of Nice, since report is wont to outrun the true account of things; yet to the end that such reports may not represent things otherwise to you than indeed they are, we have thought it necessary to send you, first, the confession of faith, which we propounded, and next the other, which, with some addition to ours, the synod established. The form proposed by us, and which was read in the presence of the most sacred emperor, and seemed to be liked and approved by all, was in this manner. The exposition of our faith, as we have received it from the bishops, who were our predecessors, both when we were first instructed in the rudiments of the faith, and when afterwards baptized into it; as we have learned from the holy scriptures, and both believed and taught, not only when we sustained the office of presbyter, but since we came to the episcopal station, so do we still believe, and produce this as the account of our faith.

“ We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible: and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God of God, Light of Light, Life of Life, the only begotten Son, the First-born of every creature, begotten of God the Father before all worlds; by whom all things were made, who for our salvation was incarnate, and dwelt amongst men, he suffered, and rose again the third day, and ascended to the Father, and shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead. We believe also in one Holy Ghost. Each of these [Persons] we believe to be and to subsist, the Father truly the Father, the Son truly the Son, and the Holy Ghost truly the Holy Ghost: as our Lord himself, when he sent forth his disciples to preach, said to them, *Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Concerning which we also declare the same to be our sense, that

ⁿ Ext. ap. Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 8. Theodor. l. i. c. 12. Gelas. Hist. Con. Nic. l. ii. c. 34. Niceph. Hist. Eccl. l. viii. c. 22. Athan. ad calc. Ep. de decret. syn. Nic.

we hold this now, that we have ever hitherto held the same, and that we shall hold it to the death, firmly persevering in this faith, and anathematizing every impious heresy. All which we profess before Almighty God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we have sincerely, and from our very hearts maintained ever since we were capable to understand ourselves, that we still do really think and speak the same things, being ready to give you all assurance and demonstration, that heretofore we have constantly so believed and preached.'

“ Having thus declared our faith, it met with no contradiction, yea, the most holy emperor himself first pronounced it to be sound and right, affirming that himself was of the same mind, and exhorting all others unanimously to assent and subscribe to this doctrine, adding only the word ‘ consubstantial ’ to it, which also he expounded, affirming, that the Son was not said to be ‘ consubstantial ’ according to corporeal affections, or that he did subsist of his Father by any kind of section or division ; it being impossible that an immaterial, intellectual, and incorporeal nature should admit any corporeal passion ; but that these things were to be understood in a divine and secret way. And so did the most wise and religious emperor discourse about these matters. The bishops, taking advantage of the emperor’s proposal concerning the word *ὁμοούσιος*, drew up the following creed :

“ ‘ The faith agreed on in the synod.

“ ‘ We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible : and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father ; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God ; begotten, not made, of the same substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, which are in heaven and in earth : who for us men and for our salvation came down, and was incarnate, and was made man, and suffered ; the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven, and shall come to judge the quick and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost. But for those that say, there was a time when he was not, or that he was not before he was, or that he was made of things that had no existence ; or that affirm the Son of God to be of any other substance or essence, or that he was created, or is obnoxious to change or alteration ; all such the catholic and apostolic church of God do anathematize and reject.’

“No sooner was the matter digested into this form, but we were especially careful to examine those phrases, ‘of the substance of the Father,’ and ‘consubstantial with the Father.’ This begat various questions and answers, and an accurate weighing the true importance of them. They acknowledged that these words ‘of the substance’ did imply, that the Son was of the Father, but not as a part of him. Which notion it seemed very reasonable to us to embrace, seeing the true doctrine teaches, that the Son is of the Father, but yet no part of his substance. Wherefore we also gave our assent to it, not rejecting the very word ‘consubstantial’ for peace sake, and that we might not decline from the right sense of things. Upon the same account we approved those terms, ‘begotten, not made;’ where they told us that ‘made’ was a word common to all other creatures that were made by the Son, with which the Son himself had no resemblance; that therefore he was no creature, like to any thing made by him, but of a substance far more excellent than any created being; which the divine oracles teach to be of the Father, by an ineffable manner of generation, which can neither be expressed, no, nor comprehended by any created understanding. So likewise for this, that the Son is ‘consubstantial,’ or of the same essence with the Father, upon debate it was agreed, that this was not to be understood after any corporeal mode, or the manner of mortal creatures, it not being capable of so being, either by division of the substance, or by abscission, or by change of the essence and power of the Father, his unbegotten nature being utterly inconsistent with any one of these: but that this, that he is ‘consubstantial with the Father,’ signified no more, than that the Son of God had no kind of similitude with any creatures, but was only, and in all things like unto this Father that begat him, not of any other subsistence or essence, but of the Father: which being so explained, it seemed very just and reasonable we should assent to it. Forasmuch as we know that some of the learned and famous bishops and writers of ancient times, in explaining the divinity of the Father and the Son, have used this word, ‘consubstantial.’ And so much for the faith here established, to which we all consented, not rashly and inconsiderately, but in the senses alleged, discussed before the most religious emperor, and, for the reasons above mentioned, approved by all. And for the anathema affixed by them at the

end of the creed, we readily own it, as what prohibits men to use unscriptural terms, from whence has arisen all the confusion and disturbance in the church. For seeing the divinely inspired scripture no where makes use of these expressions, ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, 'of things not existent,' and, 'there was a time, when he was not,' and the rest there mentioned, it seems irrational and absurd, that they should be used or taught: to which wisely contrived sentence we readily gave our suffrage, having never heretofore accustomed ourselves to such expressions. [Nor do we think it unfit to reject this, that, he was not before he was begotten, it being confessed by all, that the Son of God was pre-existent to his incarnation: yea, our most religious emperor has shewn, that as to his divine generation, he was before all worlds. For before he was in act, he was potentially in the Father by a certain unbegotten way, the Father being always a Father, as always a King and a Saviour, being all things in respect of power, always and as to all things the same.] These things, beloved, we thought necessary to acquaint you with, that you might know with how much caution we first stood off, and then yielded our assent, and how, not without reason, we resisted till the last minute, so long as there was any thing otherwise written that might give offence; but afterwards quietly embraced what was inoffensive, after that, having candidly examined the meaning of what was said, it appeared that they were consonant to that confession of faith which we had first proposed. We salute you, with the brotherhood together with you, wishing you, honoured brethren, to farewell in the Lord."

Such was the letter which Eusebius sent to his Cæsareans, to let them know how affairs went in the council, to prevent misreports concerning himself, and to assure them he had subscribed no other doctrine than what he had always delivered to them. I shall make no other reflections upon the epistle itself, than that hence it is evident, that whatever the Arians pretended concerning the novelty of the terms in the Nicene Creed, the word *ὁμοούσιος*, whereat they most boggled, was of a more ancient date, used by the fathers in the precedent ages of the church: and that whenever Eusebius speaks of Christ as in any sense created, he always means it of a divine production, to wit, his eternal generation; that he never denies him to be of the same

substance with the father in any other sense, than as the divine nature is incapable of division or separation after the manner of corporeal beings. The reader may farther remark, that that passage in the close of the epistle concerning Christ's being "actually and potentially in the father," is confused and obscure, and indeed the whole period, which we have included within breaks, is not extant in this epistle as it is in Socrates, nor in that translated by the ancient compiler of the Tripartite history. Whence one of these two things plainly follows, either that they left it out as a dangerous and unaccountable passage, or (which to me seems more probable) that not being in the original copy of this epistle, it was shuffled in by some other hand. For I cannot think Socrates would have been guilty of so much both imprudence and unfaithfulness, as when he pretends to give the whole, to cut off, and conceal part of so considerable a letter, and which being almost in every hand, must needs soon discover the fraud.

XIII. This great assembly being ended, Constantine went on in his designs for the establishment and propagation of the Christian religion. He had, not long before the synod, upon his victory over Licinius, written to the bishops in every province,^o to take care for the repairing and re-edifying of churches, and the erecting others more large and beautiful, commanding charges to that end to be allowed out of his own exchequer. His letter to Eusebius is still extant;^p wherein he tells him, he could not but suppose that the impiety and tyranny of the late times had made strange havoc and devastation of churches, and that the Divine Providence by his ministry having overcome the Dragon, and restored liberty and safety, it could not but have a mighty force upon the most prejudiced and incredulous, to bring them into the way of truth: that, therefore, he should take care of what churches were within his jurisdiction, and give the same notice to all bishops, presbyters, and deacons of his acquaintance, to use peculiar diligence in this matter, that what churches were yet standing might be repaired, or enlarged, and, where need was, new ones erected; and that what was necessary to this purpose, he, and others by his means, should require of the governors of provinces, and the prætorian prefect, to whom he had given orders to be assistant to him in any thing he should

^o De vit. Const. l. ii. c. 45. ^p Ibid. c. 46. et ap. Socrat. l. i. c. 9. Theodor. l. i. c. 15.

demand of them. Nor was he more careful to advance the true religion, than to depress the false, especially to destroy the monuments of Pagan idolatry and superstition. There stood in Palestine an aged oak called Mamre,^q which constant tradition avowed to have remained since the time of Abraham, who dwelt there. and under it entertained the angels that appeared to him. Here was annually holden a famous mart, frequented by a numerous concourse of Christians, Jews, and Gentiles from all the neighbouring nations, partly to vend their several commodities, partly to exercise the several rites of their religions: for which purpose, there were statues and altars, and sacrifices continually made upon them: notice whereof being given to Constantine by the pious princess, his mother Helen, he immediately sent despatches to Acacius the governor about it, and wrote to Eusebius, Macarius, and the rest of the Palestine bishops,^r letting them know how much he resented the profanation of so venerable a place; that a place that had been honoured with so many divine apparitions and testimonies from heaven, should be prostituted to such lewd idolatry; a thing unfit in itself, and unbecoming the piety of his reign: that therefore he had ordered the images to be burnt, the altar to be demolished, the sacrifices to be abolished, and a church to be built in the place, where nothing but the pure worship of God might be performed: which if any should dare to oppose, upon their intimation to him, he should be punished according to the just demerit of his impiety and folly. About this time, I suppose it was, (though I cannot certainly adjust the particular year,) that Constantia, Constantine's sister, and relict of the late emperor Licinius, wrote to Eusebius, as metropolitan of Palestine, desiring him to send her the image or picture of our Saviour. To which, checking her vicious curiosity, he returns this smart answer.^s "Because (says he) you desire me to send you the image of Christ, tell me which, or what kind of image of Christ it is you mean. Is it that real and unchangeable form, that naturally bears the characters of himself? or that which he took upon him for our sakes, when he clothed himself with the form of a servant? As to the form of God, I suppose you inquire not

^q Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 51. Socrat. l. i. c. 18. Sozom. l. ii. c. 4.

^r Ext. Epistola ap. Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 52, 53.

^s Extat. in Conc. Nic. ii. act. vi.

after it, being instructed by himself, 'that no man knows the Father but the Son, neither does any man sufficiently know the Son, but only the Father that begat him.' You therefore unquestionably desire the image of the form of a servant, that bodily shape which he undertook for us. But even this we know to be taken into partnership with the glory of the Deity, and what was mortal to be swallowed up of life. What painter then, with a few dead and inanimate colours, a few lifeless lines and strokes, could be able to take the resplendent lustre of so much majesty and glory; when the divine disciples themselves were not able to look upon him in the Mount, but fell upon their faces, confessing they were unable to bear such a sight? If, therefore, his bodily shape was so much altered, and derived so much power from the divinity that dwelt in it; what may we say it is, now that he has put off mortality, and being washed from all shadow of corruption, has exalted the shape of his servile form, into the glory of a Lord and God? as now it is, since his victory over death, his ascension into heaven, being seated upon a throne of majesty, at his Father's right hand, and his resting in the unconceivable and ineffable bosom of his Father, into which, while he was ascending to retake possession, the holy angels followed him with hymns and praises, saying, 'Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.'"¹ Such was his answer to the empress's message. For which free and impartial censure the fathers of the second council of Nice, the great patrons of image worship, fall upon him with hard words, and characters of reproach; as upon the same account Baronius, and they of the church of Rome, their successors in that doctrine and practice, still do at this day.

XIV. The church at this time was in a very calm and quiet state, freed from foreign persecutions by the late victory over Licinius, and rendered more peaceable within itself by the synodical determination lately made of the Arian controversy. And about this time Eusebius, probably, set himself to compose his Ecclesiastical History, as some few years since he had drawn up his Chronicon, a work of infinite and incredible labour and industry, and which he took as much care to transmit entire to posterity, as he had taken pains to compose it, obliging all tran-

¹ Ps. xxiv. 7.

scribers by this solemn obtestation," the form whereof he borrowed from Irenæus: ^v "Whoever thou art that shall transcribe this book, I adjure thee by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his glorious coming, wherein he shall judge the quick and the dead, that thou compare what thou transcribest, and diligently correct it by the copy from whence thou transcribest it, and that thou likewise transcribe this adjuration, and annex it to thy copy:" a most prudent and religious care, and nowhere more necessary than in matters of chronology, where the mistake is as easy, as the error is dangerous. And had but posterity been as careful to observe this charge, as he was to give it, we had not had such lame and broken accounts of those early ages, as we are now forced to take up with, not much of the work itself, and less of the original Greek arriving to us, and most of what remains so altered and interpolated by St. Jerome, that it is hard to say which is his, and which Eusebius's. The whole work consisted of two parts. The first, called *παντοδαπή ιστορία*, contained a kind of universal history, representing the originals and antiquities of all nations, the foundation of cities, transmigrations of people, rise of dynasties, duration of empires, successions of kings, and such like, from the creation of the world to the *vicennalia*, or twentieth year of the reign of Constantine; traversing to this end all the records and monuments both of the Greeks and Romans, both of the Eastern and Western world, being especially beholden to Africanus's Chronography, which he almost entirely transcribed into this work. But of this part, only some fragments are extant at this day. The other part is called *χρονικὸς κανὼν*, wherein he drew what was in the former into a *compendium*, reducing things to particular years, beginning from the year of Abraham's birth, which he makes the standing epoch, deriving it by decades throughout all ages, comparing with, and adjusting to it, the affairs of all nations and countries, with such memorable passages as happened in all ages of the world. After the birth of our Lord, he regulates things by a treble era, the year of our Lord, the reigns of the Roman emperors, and the series of the consuls; and herein he represents the state of the church, the names and successions of eminent bishops and famous writers, the several heresies and persecutions, and the like affairs, all re-

^u Ext. in init. Chron.

^v Vid. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. 20.

ferred to their proper periods: thereby laying the scheme of a future design, which in his Ecclesiastical History he enlarged afterwards, as himself tells us.^w This history he divided into ten books, wherein he accurately and orderly digested the affairs of the whole Christian world for somewhat above 300 years: a work noble and useful, and highly meriting of posterity, upon the account whereof he is styled *ὁ ἀροτῆρ ὁ κάλλιστος τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς γεωργίας*,^x the most excellent cultivator of ecclesiastic history, as first breaking up the ground, being, as himself tells us,^y the first that beat out the path, where he had no tract before him. He dedicated it to his old friend Paulinus, bishop of Tyre, by whose instigation and encouragement he first set upon it, and who lived not long after the council of Nice. To the same Paulinus he dedicated also two books,^z *περὶ τοπικῶν ὀνομάτων*: the first containing a chorography of Judea, the division of the twelve tribes, the description of Jerusalem and the temple; and this is lost: the second, an alphabetical account of the cities, towns, villages, mountains, and rivers mentioned in scripture, either under their ancient, or more modern names; and this has escaped the ruins of time. In the interval between his Chronicon, and his Ecclesiastic History, he seems to have penned his books, *De Præparatione et Demonstratione Evangelica*, wherein, with incomparable learning and industry, he has, out of their own writings, so baffled the main principles of the Pagan cause, and so strongly asserted the truth of Christianity against the pretences both of Jews and Gentiles, that the Christian world can never think itself sufficiently indebted to his memory. The former work consists of fifteen books, which he dedicated to Theodotus, bishop of Laodicea; the latter of twenty, extant entire in Photius's time,^a now reduced to half the number: in both which he has shewed himself a man of diffuse and infinite reading, and though there were nothing else in them, the world is greatly obliged to him for many fragments of ancient learning, which had otherwise never arrived to us. That they could not be written before this time (notwithstanding what Valesius supposes, that they were written about ten years sooner) is plain, because in them he cites, and appeals to his

^w Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 1.

^y Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 1.

^a Cod. IX.

^x Gelas. Cyz. Hist. Conc. Nic. l. ii. c. 1.

^z Vid. Præf. ad Paulin. in lib. de locis Hebr.

Canones Chronici,^b as a work already extant: now these being brought down to the twentieth year of Constantine, anno 325, the other must be written at least some time after. Though I no way doubt, but the Licinian persecution, wherein the Gentiles carried themselves high, which ended not wholly, but with the death of that prince, (which happened towards the latter end of the foregoing year,) gave birth and occasion to his undertaking of that subject. And that they were written before his Church-history is evident, because in it he cites his *οἰκεῖα ὑπομνήματα*,^c his peculiar commentaries, wherein he had collected all the prophetic passages and predictions that concerned our blessed Saviour, and had thence demonstratively enforced the truth of all those things that related to him: which can properly be applied to nothing but his books of Evangelical Demonstration, which are little else but a collection of the passages of the ancient prophets, and an application of them to our Saviour.

XV. The Nicene decrees, though they had a little allayed the present heats, yet the spirit of the Arian faction did still ferment, and broke out more openly in the contentions between Eusebius bishop of Nicomedia, and Eustathius bishop of Antioch, who mutually recriminated each other; though Sozomen says,^d that instead of him of Nicomedia, it was our Eusebius; but withal adds, that the dispute between them lay only in words, they both agreeing that the Son had his personal *hypostasis* or subsistence, but that mistaking each other's sense, they scuffled in the dark. But with the other Eusebius, Eustathius had a fiercer contest. For Eusebius of Nicomedia being lately returned from banishment, and having regained some interest at court,^e under a pretence of visiting the holy places at Jerusalem, and especially the magnificent structures which the emperor was building there, was furnished by him with all accommodations for his journey; where, taking Antioch in his way, he laid the foundation of that design which he carried on at his return thither. For having procured a synod to be holden there, Eustathius was accused by Cyrus, bishop of Beræa, of Sabelianism;^f and to make the indictment more heavy, some immoralities were laid to his charge, a woman of lewd fame being brought into the synod with an infant sucking in her arms,

^b Præp. Evang. l. x. c. 9.

^c Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 2.

^d Lib. ii. c. 18.

^e Theodor. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 21.

^f Socrat. l. i. c. 24. Theodor. ibid.

which she impudently affirmed to be his, and when put to it, ratified it with her oath. Whereupon the good man was deposed by the council, and an account of it being transmitted to the emperor, he was by his order immediately banished into Illyricum. This kindled a mighty flame at Antioch,^g the city hereupon running into great faction and disorder, both magistrates and people, soldiers and tradesmen, betaking themselves to arms, and things had come to downright blows and blood, had not great care been used to prevent it. For besides the emperor's frequent despatches from court, by persons of honour and authority, to compose the tumults, moderate men thought no expedient better to allay the disorders, than to choose some person of learning and eminency to succeed in that chair, in whom both parties might meet and centre. Hereupon the synod pitched upon our Eusebius, then present in the council, a man of unquestionable learning, and one whom they knew to be highly in favour with the emperor, to whom they sent an account of their election. But the fierce animosities and divisions still continued in the city, a great part both of the clergy and people passionately contending for Eusebius's translation thither, as others were importunate for Eustathius's restitution to that place. But Eusebius not caring to fish in troubled waters, nor liking the see ever the better, out of which a famous man had been so indirectly thrown, but especially beholding it as against the rules and constitutions of the church, which ordinarily allowed not a bishop to be translated from one see to another, and this ratified by a canon of the late Nicene synod,^h obstinately declined the election, whereof by letter he certified the emperor, who was infinitely pleased with his prudence and piety in that affair. Upon his refusal, his dear friend Paulinus of Tyre was translated thither. But he had not held it above six months, when the see became again vacant by his death. The emperor, upon the receipt of Eusebius's letter, wrote back to the people of Antioch to this effect,ⁱ that he very well knew the person whom they had chosen, and recommended to him with such honourable characters, and that he was one whom he had a long time had in great veneration for his learning and modesty, and that in this competition not many might be found equal to him: but yet

^g Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 50. Socrat. l. i. c. 24. Sozom. l. ii. c. 18.

^h Conc. Nic. Can. xv.

ⁱ Ext. Epist. ap. Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 60.

that it was not fit that one church should be provided for to the prejudice of another, that every one should be content with his own bounds, and rest satisfied with their peculiar allotments, that the souls of men in a smaller as well as in a greater church were equally dear to heaven, and therefore should not have their guide and pastor ravished from them, an act of greater violence than justice: that they should do well to unite in love and concord, and, laying aside all seditious and immodest clamours, prudently make choice of such a person as might be most proper and convenient for them. To the same purpose he wrote to the bishops in the synod,^k letting them know how much he approved Eusebius's prudent resolution to waive the election, as a thing highly consonant to the laws of the church; that he understood that Euphronius, presbyter of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, and George the Arethusian presbyter of Alexandria, were men of approved integrity in the faith, whom, together with such others as they should think fit for that episcopal station, they should set before them, and proceed in the election, as the rules of the church and apostolical tradition did require. Together with these, he wrote particularly to Eusebius himself this following letter.^l

“ Constantine the Great, the August, the Conqueror, to
Eusebius.

“ I have often read your letter, and perceive how exactly you observe the rule of ecclesiastic discipline. For to persevere in those things that are both acceptable to God, and agreeable to apostolical tradition, is highly pious; herein may you account yourself happy, that by the testimony almost of all the world, you have been thought worthy to be bishop of the whole church. For since all have been ambitious to enjoy you, it unquestionably makes a great addition to your happiness. But your wisdom, whereby you have been taught to keep the commands of God, and the apostolical canon of the church, has done very well in refusing the charge of the church of Antioch, and in desiring to continue in that episcopal station, wherein, by the will of God, you were placed from the very first. But concerning this affair I have written to the people, as also to your colleagues, who had written to me about this matter: which letters, when your holi-

^k Extat. *ibid.* c. 62.

^l Extat. *ibid.* c. 61.

ness shall peruse, you will easily understand, that it being but just that I should deny their request, what I wrote to them about it was by immediate guidance and direction from God. It will become your wisdom to join in consultation with them, that so this affair of the church of Antioch may be settled. God have you in his keeping, dear brother.”

The issue of the business was, that Eusebius remained where he was, and Euphronius was chosen to the see of Antioch, being one of the two whom the emperor had nominated in his letter to them.

XVI. Thus ended the troubles of Antioch, and the synod there, held anno 330,^m a year memorable for the dedication of Constantinople, whither Constantine having translated the seat of the empire, and enriched it with all the ornaments of state and grandeur, which the power of so great a prince was capable to confer upon it, solemnly dedicated it, May the 11th, impressing his own name upon it, an honour which of all the fortunes of that mighty empire, is the only surviving monument of his greatness at this day. Nor was he unmindful of acts of piety, erecting several fair churches and oratories for the assemblies of divine worship, and that they might not be unfurnished of bibles for their holy offices, he wrote to Eusebius (whom he knew most capable of this affair, both for his learning, and the incomparable library at Cæsarea) to provide him fifty copies transcribed for that use. The copy of the letter we here insert.ⁿ

“Constantine the Great, the August, the Conqueror, to
Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea.

“In the city that bears our name, by the blessing and providence of God our Saviour, there are great numbers of men gathered to the holy church. Since then all things there are mightily improved, it seems above all things convenient, that several churches should be erected there. Understand therefore what I am most readily resolved to do. It seemed good to me to intimate to your wisdom, that you cause fifty copies of the holy Scriptures, the use whereof you know to be absolutely necessary to the church, to be fairly transcribed in parchment

^m Gallicano et Symmacho. His Coss. dedicata est Constantinopolis die 5. Idus Maias. Idat. Fast. Consul. An. Ær. Hisp. 368.

ⁿ Ext. ap. Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iv. c. 36. Socrat. l. i. c. 9. Theodor. l. i. c. 16.

by antiquaries accurately dexterous in that art, such as may be easily read, and carried up and down upon any occasion. To this end we have graciously written to the treasurer of the diocese, to take care that all necessary charges be allowed for the providing those books. Your part it is, diligently to see that they be prepared with all speed that may be; for the transmitting whereof, you shall, by virtue of these letters, receive the command of two public carriages, that so the copies, fairly transcribed, may be the more conveniently brought to our presence, attended by one of the deacons of your church, who at his arrival shall not fail to taste of our grace and kindness. God preserve you, dear brother."

No sooner had Eusebius received the commands, but he immediately caused the books to be copied out,^o which, in parcels richly and elegantly bound, he transmitted to the emperor: who in his answer signified his approbation of them; as also, how well he was pleased with what he had been told, that Gaza, a town in Palestine, had renounced idolatry, and embraced the true religion: for which he endowed it with great privileges, advancing it to the honour of a city, and gracing it with the title of Constantia, the name of his own sister. Together with this letter concerning the bibles, he sent also an answer to Eusebius, about his book concerning the Paschal solemnity, which he had lately dedicated to him, wherein he had explained the original, and all the mysteries of the festival: in which answer he tells him,^p how diligently he read his book, how greatly he admired his excellent learning, and indefatigable studies, and how desirous he was, frequently to receive such discourses from him, that he was resolved, by publishing his book, to make it universally useful, and that in order thereunto, he had caused it to be elegantly translated into the Latin tongue.

XVII. The Arian party, by subtle artifices and insinuations at court, daily gain ground of the orthodox, whom they laboured by all ways possible to suppress. The main stickler in defence of the Nicene Creed was Athanasius, whom, not being able to rout by force of argument, they loaded with all the black and infamous calumnies, which wit or malice could invent, and these represented with all advantages to the emperor: who, incensed

^o Euseb. *ibid.* c. 37.

^p Ext. *Epist. ap. Euseb. ibid.* c. 35.

hereat, commanded a synod to be convened at Cæsarea in Palestine,^q Eusebius's episcopal see, where after a tedious expectation nothing was done, the party accused refusing to appear: which the emperor so far resented, that some time after, anno 335, he commanded another synod to be held at Tyre, empowering our Eusebius and some others to inquire into the merits of the cause, charging Athanasius under severe penalties to appear: who came accordingly,^r attended with several Egyptian bishops, his suffragans, who appeared in his behalf; amongst which was Potamo bishop of Heraclea, who had been Eusebius's fellow-prisoner under the Diocletian persecution: a man of a blunt and rugged temper, who, beholding Eusebius upon the bench, transported with an ungovernable zeal, rudely accosted him in this manner. "And must you, Eusebius, sit upon the bench, whilst innocent Athanasius stands to be judged by you at the bar? Who can endure such proceedings? Tell me, were not you in prison with me in the time of the persecution? I for my part lost an eye in defence of the truth; you have neither wounds to shew in any part of your body, neither suffered any kind of martyrdom, but are alive and whole. How got you out of prison, unless you either engaged to the persecutors to offer sacrifice, or it may be actually did it?" The improbability of which uncharitable suggestion we shewed before. Eusebius, offended with so insolent a reflection, and thinking such carriages ill-beseeming persons accused towards the emperor's commissioners, rose up and dissolved the meeting for that time, saying, "If when you are come hither, you take the liberty to talk at this rate against us, the things may be true which your accusers lay to your charge: for if you exercise so much tyranny here, what will you do in your own country?"

XVIII. While things were thus debating at Tyre, the bishops were summoned by the emperor's letters, to go forthwith to Jerusalem, to celebrate the dedication of that famous church which he had erected there. For Constantine had some time since, by a letter, directed to Macarius bishop of Jerusalem,^s given order for the building a most stately church over the place of our Lord's resurrection, or as others, the place of his passion; or as some, one in each, commanding that it should be

^q Sozom. l. ii. c. 25. Theodor. l. i. c. 28.

^r Epiph. Hæres. lxxviii. c. 7.

^s Ext. Epist. ap. Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 39.

done with all the advantages of splendour and greatness, and that neither cost nor pains should be spared about it. And the work was done accordingly : the porch before it large and open, paved with shining stone, and encompassed on three sides with large porticos ; the church itself large and high, the walls on the outside of polished stone, on the inside set with variegated marble, the roof adorned with the choicest carved work, all overlaid with gold ; at the upper end a semicircle, surrounded with twelve columns, after the number of the twelve apostles, the tops whereof were crowned with chapiters of silver. But I shall not undertake to describe particulars, it may suffice, that it wanted nothing of ornament or magnificence, which art or cost could confer upon it ; not to mention the princely gifts, especially the rich carpet and hangings for the altar, curiously wrought with gold and jewels, and such-like noble presents, which he bestowed upon it. Hither came the bishops from Tyre,^t where they were met by multitudes from other provinces, who flocked to this solemnity, and were received with great state by persons of honour and quality sent from court to entertain them at the emperor's cost ; the chief of whom was Marianus, the emperor's secretary, a pious and religious man, who having been a confessor in the late times, was the fittest to be employed upon this errand. The solemnity was managed with all imaginable expressions of festivity and rejoicing, magnificent feasts and entertainments, mighty charity to the poor, but especially acts of great piety towards God, the bishops employing themselves in the offices of religion, in prayers and sermons, some celebrating the emperor's piety towards our Saviour, and the magnificence of the structure ; others discoursing upon some divine subject, accommodated to the present occasion. Some expounding the portion appointed to be read out of the holy scriptures, explaining the mystical and hidden sense ; others, not so well qualified for that, being taken up in the celebration of the eucharist, and in prayers and praises, interceding with God for the common peace, for the good of the church, for the emperor and his happy issue. But herein none bore a greater part than our Eusebius, honouring the solemnity with several public discourses, sometimes by writing, setting forth the greatness of the royal edifice ; otherwhiles representing the prophetic scrip-

^t Euzeb. *ibid.* l. iv. c. 43. Sozom. l. ii. c. 26. Theodor. l. i. c. 31.

tures, and adapting them to the present state of things; and after all, drawing up a particular description of this famous church, the fashion of our Saviour's sepulchre, the beauty and elegancy of the building, the several gifts wrought with gold, silver, and precious stones; in a book on purpose of this subject, which he dedicated to the emperor, and annexed to his books *De vita Constantini*; but it is long since lost.

XIX. During the celebration of this great solemnity, Athanasius had made his address at court,^u complaining of the unjust proceedings against him in the late council of Tyre; whereupon the emperor summoned some of those bishops to court, to give an account of the transactions of that synod: who came accordingly to Constantinople, and our Eusebius amongst the rest; and it being now near the thirtieth year of Constantine's reign, he solemnized his *tricennalia*; at that time Eusebius made that famous encomiastic in praise of Constantine,^v yet extant, which the emperor honoured with his presence; and how well he liked it, he shewed by the cheerfulness of his looks, and those peculiar honours and entertainments wherewith he treated the bishops at the end of it. This being, as he tells us, the second oration which he had made before the emperor in his palace; the former having been a panegyric upon our Saviour's sepulchre,^w which the pious emperor, though in his own house, heard standing, although Eusebius importuned him to take his chair. And when, fearing to tire him with the length of his discourse, he offered in civility to break off, the emperor bade him to proceed unto the end; at which he again pressed him to sit down, but the emperor refused, saying, it was not fit at any time, much less at this, to hear discourses concerning God in postures of ease and softness, and that it was very pious to stand while we were hearing discourses about divine things. Amongst others that absented themselves both from the synod at Tyre, and the dedicatory solemnity at Jerusalem, was Marcellus, bishop of Ancyra, the metropolis of Galatia, who became the author of some disturbance in the church upon this occasion. Asterius, a sophister of Cappadocia, had lately published some books in Syria, in defence of the Arian tenets; which Marcellus reading, undertook to answer; wherein, either designedly, or by surprise, he fell into another extreme, running into the opinion of

^u Theodor. l. i. c. 31.

^v Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iv. c. 46.

^w Ibid. c. 33.

Paulus Samosatenus, that our blessed Saviour was but a mere man, that he took his existence from the time of his incarnation,^x before which he had no proper *hypostasis*, but lay quiescent in the mind and will of the Father, as a word does in man, till actual speaking brings it forth, and that at last his kingdom should cease, and his human nature being put off, he should be again resolved into the existence of the Father; together with such-like gross and impious assertions, stuffing his book with tart reflections, bitter and severe invectives against those that differed from him,^y sparing neither living nor dead, heaping loads of calumnies and reproaches upon them. This book he had presented, with a great many flattering addresses and insinuations to the emperor, hoping he would espouse and undertake his cause; but the emperor referred the examination and determination of the matter to the bishops now assembled in synod at Constantinople:^z the process was begun against him in the council at Jerusalem, during which he had engaged he would burn his book. But that assembly being suddenly broke up by the hasty message they received from the emperor, the business for that time was laid aside. But being now at better leisure, they resumed the process, and finding the man would not comply with his former promise, they proceeded to his censure, and deposed him from his bishopric, substituting one Basil, a learned and eloquent person, in his room; and wrote to the churches in those parts to hunt out his book, and burn it wherever they found it, and to recover those who had been infected with it; annexing to their epistles some extracts out of it, containing those pestilent *dogmata* that were in it: which done, they commanded our Eusebius to undertake the confutation of it,^a which he accordingly performed in five books; the two first expressly written against Marcellus, wherein he exposes his opinions out of his own writings, with some brief reflections upon them: in the other three, entitled *De Ecclesiastica Theologia*, dedicated to Flaccillus, bishop of Antioch, he sets himself to a more strict and accurate refutation of them, and in both plainly evinces him to have been guilty of Sabellianism

^x Vid. Euseb. cont. Marcell. l. i. c. 1. l. ii. c. 1. et alib. passim.

^y Euseb. contr. Marcell. l. i. c. 1.

^z Sozom. l. ii. c. 33. Euseb. *ibid.* l. ii. c. 2. Niceph. Hist. Eccl. l. viii. c. 53. Socrat. l. i. c. 36.

^a Euseb. *loc. citat.*

and the Samosatenian errors. As for Marcellus himself, he made a shift a long time to bear up his reputation by his adhering to the orthodox, sheltering himself especially under the wing of Athanasius, who pleaded strongly for him at every turn, and recommended his cause at Rome, whither he fled, and was entertained by pope Julius, where he published an apology for himself, and finally was acquitted, and restored to his see by the synod at Sardica, who declared that what he had written had been propounded only by way of question,^b not delivered as positive and dogmatical assertions; that he did not maintain (what was charged upon him) that God the Word took his beginning from his incarnation, nor that his kingdom should have an end; but on the contrary he affirmed, that his kingdom neither had a beginning, nor should ever have an end. And yet after all he proved a subtle heretic, and was condemned and rejected not only by St. Basil,^c but by Athanasius himself. And Epiphanius^d tells us,^e that when himself once asked Athanasius, what he thought of him, as he did not passionately exclaim against him, so neither would he acquit him, only smiling at the mention of him. And evident it is, that Epiphanius himself thought him guilty of very heretical notions and propositions, and that the very apologies which he was forced to make for himself, shewed that there lay something at the bottom.

XX. It was now the year 337, when the Great Constantine left the world: his distemper at first was only a light indisposition, which soon grew up into an incurable sickness,^f for which cause he was first carried to the baths, thence removed to Helenople, and so to Achyrona, a place within the suburbs of Nicomedia, where he immediately caused himself to be baptized; and being, as the custom in such cases was, clothed in white, he would thenceforth suffer no purple to come near him. Having made his will, and disposed the affairs of the empire, with a mind infinitely satisfied in what he had done, and impatiently desirous of that state whither he was going; he expired in his palace at Nicomedia, May the 22nd, about noon, being the last day of the Pentecost solemnity, after he had

^b Vid. Epist. Synod. Sard. ap. Theodor. l. ii. c. 7.

^c Epist. lxi. ad Athanas. s. 2.

^d Sev. Sulp. l. ii. c. 37.

^e Hæres. lxxii. c. 4.

^f Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iv. c. 61.

reigned thirty years and ten months. His death was ushered in by a blazing star,^g and exceedingly lamented by the soldiers and officers of the army, by all the ministers of state, and universally by all the subjects of the empire, the senate and people of Rome shutting up their baths, and the *fora*, prohibiting all public spectacles and delightful entertainments, and dedicating statues to him; and all the while his body lay in state at Nicomedia, all the great officers at court, the senators, and magistrates of the city, daily came and paid the same reverence and obeisance to him which they were wont to do while he was alive. Constantius being arrived, the corpse was, with all the pomp and solemnity that was befitting the funerals of so great a prince, translated from Nicomedia to Constantinople, and there, with universal sorrow, interred in the *vestibulum* of the great church, which he himself had erected and dedicated to the holy apostles. A prince of a generous mind, and undaunted courage, and an indefatigable industry, whereto he was greatly animated by an unsatisfied desire of praise, especially military glory. Admirable laws he framed for the common good, which he impartially executed. The embassies and complaints from the provinces he heard patiently, and did them justice. He was powerful and prosperous, a great patron of learning in others, and himself very learned and studious; and, which is above all, devout and pious, having from his first conversion to Christianity expressed a mighty zeal and passion for the honour of God, and the interests of religion. Zosimus, a Pagan writer, asperses his memory with a very odious, but withal unjust representation of the reason of his turning Christian. He tells us,^h that being haunted with the conscience of his notorious crimes in the death of his son Crispus, and his lady Fausta, and his perfidious dealing with Licinius, he applied himself to the Gentile priests for purgation and absolution, who told him, their religion allowed no methods of expiation for such great offences; that hereupon he was brought into acquaintance with an Egyptian, newly arrived from Spain, who assured him, that the Christian religion was able to do away any crimes whatsoever, and that no sooner did the most profligate wretch close with it, but he should be immediately delivered from the guilt of all his sins; upon which assurance he renounced the religion of his ancestors, and went

^g A. Vict. edit. Schott. c. 41.

^h Hist. l. ii. c. 29.

over to the Christians. This is the tale as told by my author. But besides the known spite and malice of the man in matters relating to Christianity, there needs no more to confute the story; than that the account is inconsistent with itself, it being plain beyond all denial, that Constantine had embraced the Christian religion no less than ten or eleven years before those unhappy accidents of the death of Crispus and Fausta fell out, which this author makes the immediate occasion of his conversion to it. Another Gentile historian is more favourable to his memory;ⁱ he commends him for his learning, eloquence, and courteousness, and the rest of those virtues for which he was celebrated and cried up to the skies; and affirms, that had he but put some bounds to his bounty and ambition, and those arts wherewith great minds are usually carried away in an over-eager pursuit of glory, he had come nearer to a god than a man. He was modest and humble, and notwithstanding some acts of severity, and perhaps cruelty, which the reasons and necessities of state might put him upon, and whereof we at this distance can make no true judgment, tender and compassionate, of a courteous and obliging temper, kind to all, and charitable to the poor, large and even profuse in his gifts, magnificent in his expenses, which made him sometimes grate hard upon the subject in taxes and tributes, but especially bountiful to admiration to the bishops and guides of religion, to whom he thought he could never enough express an honourable regard; tender of the state of the empire, but most incomparably solicitous of the peace of the church. But it is not for me to attempt his character, the thing is done by a much better hand, one who knew him best, and was most familiarly conversant with him; I mean our Eusebius, who, not long after his death, drew up an account of his life and actions, not in the way of a strict history, but more like an orator and encomiast, not designing (as himself assures us^k) to fill up all the particularities of his life, but to draw the more considerable lineaments and proportions, in some of the greater lines and strokes of his piety and virtue, which was all he propounded to himself in that work: which may serve as an answer to the great exception which Photius makes against it,^l that in it he gives no larger an account concerning the affairs of

ⁱ Aur. Vict. Schott. c. 40.

^k De vit. Const. l. i. c. 11.

^l Cod. CXXVII.

Arius, and the transactions of the council of Nice, his design being more immediately restrained to the personal affairs of Constantine; and that too in an encomiastic, rather than in a strict historical way, which Socrates assigns as the reason of this omission.^m This he has done in four books, or, as in Robert Stephens's edition they are reckoned, five, which a learned man wonders whence he derived.ⁿ But plain it is, that long before him Nicephorus had expressly mentioned five books,^o under the last no doubt comprehending his description of the church of our Saviour's sepulchre, or it may be Constantine's oration *ad Coetum Sanctorum*, both which Eusebius himself had annexed as an appendix to them; for that he could not mean his oration *de laudibus Constantini*, is evident, in that immediately after he reckons it as distinct from it. This work, he tells us,^p he undertook as a piece of gratitude to his great master, thinking it very shameful and indecent, that when Nero and Caligula had found those who clothed their bad actions in large and elegant relations, he should be silent in the cause of so good and incomparable a prince, who had had the honour to stand before him, and familiarly to converse with him. And for this reason, perhaps, he uses somewhat a more neat and florid style than in his other writings: which hath given occasion to some to call in question the genuineness of the book itself. But it is a wonder to me, any learned man should doubt of it; when, not to insist upon other arguments, and the unanimous authority of the ancients, Eusebius himself does more than once and again expressly own himself to be the author of it.^q

XXI. Nor did Eusebius himself long survive his great patron, dying anno 340,^r a little before the death of the younger Constantine; succeeded in his see by Acacius, one of his scholars, a man of considerable learning, who, amongst many other books, wrote the Life of his master Eusebius, which, had it been extant, would have enabled us to present his affairs with a better face, without being so much beholden to the pens of those who had no great kindness for him. He was a man sober and serious, of a very strict and philosophic course of life, infinitely zealous for the honour and interest of the Christian religion, which he

^m Lib. i. c. 1.

ⁿ Vales. Annot. ad c. 1. l. 1. de vit. Const.

^o Hist. Eccl. l. vi. c. 37.

^p Id. ibid. c. 10.

^q Lib. ii. c. 45, 46. l. iv. c. 33, 34, 35.

^r Socrat. l. ii. c. 4, 5.

readily defended against all opposers. His parts were great, and his learning incomparable, for which the age he lived in, and all ages ever since, have risen up before him with a just veneration. So uncontrollable his reputation herein, even in those early times, that when Sabinus, the Macedonian bishop, (who collected the acts of several synods,) charged the fathers of the Nicene council, for a company of rude and illiterate persons, Socrates thought it exception enough to that slander, to say,^s that he involved Eusebius in that charge, whose learning was above all exception. Nay, one of his greatest adversaries is forced to give him this testimony,^t that he was a man of singular learning, one that had run through and searched into all the books and writings of the ancients, and laid open their several sentiments and opinions; evidences whereof, he tells us, are those many excellent writings which he left behind him for the benefit of posterity. He wrote, says St. Jerome,^u infinite volumes, many whereof are long since lost, and some the notice whereof never arrived at us. His books against Porphyry (not now extant) and of the Preparation and Demonstration of the Gospel, shew how great a defender he was of the Christian cause, and how able to baffle both Jew and Gentile at their own weapon. Nor was he less versed in the antiquities of the church, and the acts and sufferings of the martyrs; the memoirs whereof he drew together, wherein he was furnished with an incomparable advantage, if it be true, what St. Jerome, or the author under his name, probably enough reports,^w that when Constantine the Great came to Cæsarea, and bade Eusebius ask whatever might be advantageous and beneficial to his church, he told the emperor, his church was well enough endowed already, but that there was one thing which he most passionately desired, that the proceedings of the judges and governors successively against the martyrs and confessors through all parts of the Roman empire, might be diligently sought out, and the records and monuments searched, and that what martyrs suffered under such judges, in what city or province,

^s Lib. i. c. 9, 9.

^t Antip. Bostr. l. i. adv. Euseb. Apol. pro Orig. in Synod. Nic. ii. act. v.

^u De Script. in Euseb.

^w Epist. ad Chrom. et Heliod. præf. Martyrol. sub nomine Hieron. vid. Antip. Bostr. loc. supra citat.

upon what day, and by what kind of martyrdom, all these notices being extracted out of the public archives and registers, might by his majesty's order be transmitted to him: which was done accordingly, and out of these materials he principally compiled his Ecclesiastic History, and made up that *ἀρχαίον μαρτυρίων συναγωγή* he so often mentions, the collection of ancient martyrdoms, which the Acts of St. Sylvester assure us,^x consisted of eleven books, wherein he described the sufferings which persons of all sorts underwent in all the parts and provinces of the world: a vast work, and which is said^y (how truly I know not) to be still extant in the king's library at the Escorial in Spain. His style in all his writings, (as Photius observes,^z) is neither pure nor pleasant, neither elegant nor perspicuous, though in his books *De vita Constantini*, more neat and florid than the rest. And this roughness of phrase Theodore Metochita supposes he contracted by living a good while in Egypt,^a affirming that all who were educated there were infected with such a harsh and rugged style.

XXII. But that which has raised a loud outcry against his name and memory, is his siding with the Arians in their councils against the Catholics, and his, at best, doubtful and ambiguous expressions in those controverted doctrines; upon which account St. Jerome at every turn makes no scruple to style him the head,^b the champion, the standard-bearer of the party. And the charge is generally taken for granted, and in most cases it is put in as a bar to his authority; and a late learned man,^c to help on the matter, makes the Eusebian faction to have been denominated and derived from him, when it is notoriously evident they were so called from the other Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia. It must be confessed, he maintained a great correspondence with the chief of the Arian party. His frequent attendance at court, and in all ecclesiastical assemblies, engaging him in their society, whose principles it is like he did not believe to be so bad as others apprehended them; and plain it is,

^x Vita S. Silv. Gr. Lat. à Combef. Edit. in Prin. p. 258.

^y Fr. Bivar. Comment. in Dextr. Chron. ad Ann. 308. p. 359.

^z Cod. XIII. et CXXVII.

^a Miscell. MS. ap. Vales. ubi supra.

^b Epist. xli. ad Pamm. et Ocean. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 342. Apol. adv. Rufin. l. i. p. 357. l. ii. p. 419.

^c Hotting. Hist. Eccl. c. 4.

by his letter to the bishop of Alexandria, that Arius, by shifting and dressing up his notions, and by other arts of dissimulation, had imposed upon him. Nor can it be denied, but that there are many unwary and dangerous expressions to be found in his writings: and what wonder, if one that had so long conversed with the several books and principles of philosophers, especially the writings of the Platonists, that had so thoroughly canvassed the books of Origen, should express himself in such sublime and intricate questions, in a way somewhat different from others of that age, especially while as yet the church had made no explicit determination in those points; considering withal, how loosely and incautiously many other Ante-Nicene fathers, as well as he, express themselves in these matters? But not to rest in a general apology, let us consider a little, what materials he himself can furnish out to one that would undertake his plea. And whoever impartially considers the case, will find enough, I doubt not, in his own writings, those especially of his latter time, to vindicate him from the charge of downright Arianism, to be sure extremely to mitigate the severity of the censures that are passed upon him. Amongst many, a few instances shall suffice; can we suppose him an Arian, that confesses the dignity, the nature, and essence of the Son of God to be ineffable;^d that he was a Light before the world was; the intellectual and essential Wisdom that was before all ages; the living Word that was with the Father in the beginning, and was God? That not only styles him^e *τοῦ καθόλου Θεοῦ παῖδα γνήσιον*, the natural Son of that God that is over all, but *αὐτοθεόν*, God of himself, (than which nothing could be said more expressly to assert his self-subsisting independent Deity, it being a word, which I am sure no Arian in the world can use;) and a little after, *τὸν παμβασιλέα καὶ παναγήμενον καὶ αὐτὸν Θεὸν λόγον*,^f the Word that is universal King and Governor, and of himself God: and elsewhere, the perfect Word,^g the only begotten of the Father, not consisting like other words in the power of prolation, not compounded of names, words, and syllables, nor expressed by articulate sounds, but the living and operative Word of the great God, *κατ' οὐσίαν τε ὑφ' ἑστῶς*, personally subsisting, which as being the power and wisdom of God, proceeds out of his

^d Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 2.^e Ibid. l. x. c. 4.^f Ibid.^g De Laud. Const. c. 12. vid. de Eccl. Theol. l. i. c. 10.

Father's Godhead and dominion. He tells us,^h it is the doctrine of the church, to acknowledge but one God, the Father of the only begotten Son, and Jesus Christ that only Son, not according to carnal generation, but according to that (incomprehensible to us) which he had of the Father before all worlds, by which he receives the fulness of the Father's Godhead; that the true Catholic church owns but one God,ⁱ and one only begotten Son, and him God of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds;^k being indeed not the same with the Father, *καθ' ἑαυτὸν δὲ ὄντα καὶ ζῶντα, καὶ ἀληθῶς υἱὸν συνόντα*, but subsisting and living of himself, and truly co-existing with the Father, God of God, Light of Light, and Life of Life, begotten of the Father in a manner ineffable, and altogether unconceivable by human understanding; that he is *αὐτοζωὴ καὶ αὐτοσοφία καὶ αὐτολόγος*, life, wisdom, and reason itself, all which he immediately communicates to created beings: that the Son is of one and the same substance,^l as proceeding from one and the same Father; that the divine nature is simple, indivisible, and uncompounded, without parts, not otherwise capable of being God. Therefore he makes it great blasphemy in Marcellus,^m to make God the Word differ in power and essence from the Father; and expressly affirms,ⁿ that the only begotten Word of God does, *τῷ αὐτοῦ πατρὶ συμβασιλεύειν ἐξ ἀνάρχων αἰώνων εἰς ἀπείρους καὶ ἀτελευτήτους αἰῶνας*, reign together with the Father from ages, without beginning unto infinite and eternal ages. If he at any time affirm the Father to be the only true God, he never does it to exclude the Son, but as the word God does primarily refer to the Father as the fountain and *principium* of the Deity, never understanding it (as he tells Marcellus,^o who objected this very thing) in any other sense, than wherein our Saviour meant it, when he said, "thee, the only true God." If he style him (as sometimes he does) *δεύτερον αἴτιον*,^p a secondary cause, it is plain he means it of the *οἰκονομία* of the Son, either as he cooperates with and serves his Father's will in the work of creation, or of his procuring great blessings to mankind, as Mediator, and the Saviour of the world, in which respects the ancient fathers made no scruple of styling

^h De Eccl. Theol. l. i. c. 2.ⁱ Ibid. c. 3.^k Ibid. c. 8.^l De laud. Const. c. 12. ^m Contr. Marcell. l. i. c. 4. p. 29. ⁿ De laud. Const. c. 2.^o Contr. Marcell. l. i. c. 4. p. 27.^p Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 2. l. x. c. 4.

him *ὑπουργὸν* and *ὑπηρέτην* a servant and minister, before the Arian controversies disturbed the church: nay, in that very place where he calls him a second cause; he yet adds, that he is the natural and only begotten Son of God; the Lord, God, and King of all created beings, who, together with the Godhead, the power and honour, received empire and dominion from the Father. When he asserts, that he is not *ἐν καὶ ταὐτὸν ὑπάρχων τῷ Θεῷ*,^q one and the same with God, he means, that he has not the same *hypostasis* with the Father, in opposition to Marcellus, who maintained that impious error; otherwise, that he did subsist, and had *ζωὴν ἰδίαν*, his proper and peculiar life; that there is *μία ἀρχὴ καὶ κεφαλὴ*,^r one head and principle of the Deity, which is God the Father, who has a proper, unbegotten, imprincipiate Deity, and fountain of monarchical power, which he imparts and communicates to the Son, *τῆς ἑαυτοῦ θεότητός τε καὶ ζωῆς μεταδούς*, making him to partake of his divinity and life, and this still as he is the *principium* and fountain of the Godhead: in which sense he afterwards declares the Son to be *οὐκ ἀναρχον, οὐδὲ ἀγέννητον*,^s neither without beginning, nor unbegotten, lest the church should make two several *principia* and two Gods. He tells us, that the Son was always present,^t and intimately conversant with the Father, and that when he came into the world to prosecute the salvation of mankind, he came forth of the most inward and unapproachable recesses of the paternal divinity and power; and that the same was true concerning the Holy Spirit, which yet was *ἕτερον ὑπάρχων παρὰ τὸν υἱὸν*, another subsistence from the Son. His design in that place being to shew, that there are three *hypostases* in the Trinity, against the doctrine of Marcellus, who taught that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were but three names of one and the same *hypostasis*. It must be confessed, that a little after he dangerously affirms the Spirit to be *ἓν τι τῶν διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ γινομένων*,^u one of the things that were made by the Son; unless we understand him concerning the temporal mission of the Holy Ghost, whom Christ promised to bestow upon the world. How oft does he expressly deny those propositions, that “the Son was made of things not existent,” and that “there was a time when he was not,”

^q De Eccl. Theol. l. i. c. 20.

^r Ibid. c. 11.

^s Ibid. l. ii. c. 6.

^t Ibid. l. iii. c. 4.

^u Ibid. c. 6.

therein subverting some of the chief Arian dogmata, condemned *in terminis* in the Nicene Creed, and by which Athanasius himself confesses,^w though he purged himself, he condemned them. Add to all which, his subscribing the Nicene Creed, wherein the Arian doctrines were condemned with all imaginable care and accuracy. And though it be uncharitably suggested by many, that he did this with a fraudulent and deceitful mind, understanding the terms in his own sense, yet nothing can be plainer, than that he freely and solemnly protests in his letter to the people of Cæsarea, that he took them in that very sense and explication of them which the fathers of that council had themselves fixed upon them. Nor did he subscribe rashly, and hand over head, but with mature deliberation, and after a most strict examination of every word, and a being fully satisfied in the sense of every article, as in that letter is declared at large. And though he seldom or never uses the word *ὁμοούσιος*, for which he had no fancy, as being an unscriptural term; yet the thing itself he fully owns, that the Son has the same essence and substance with the Father, as we have before observed more than once, that he is his only begotten Son,^x his image, proceeding of him, *πάντη τε καὶ κατὰ πάντα ὁμοιωτάτην ὄντα τῷ γεγεννηκότι, καὶ αὐτὸν Θεόν*, altogether and in all things most like to him that begat him, yea, of himself God: and that therefore, they are justly to be condemned,^y that dare to call him a creature, or affirm that he proceeds out of a state of non-existence, after the manner of created beings. All which considered, makes me the more wonder at what Athanasius tells us^z our Eusebius expressly affirmed in a letter to Euphratiou, that Christ is not true God. Pity it is, that the epistle itself is not now extant, that we might have viewed his genuine sense. Sure I am, the proposition, as it is represented by Athanasius, is plainly contrary to, and inconsistent with the most mature and deliberate declarations of his mind, in all his writings extant at this day. All that can be guessed at this distance is, what arises from the Acts of the second Nicene council, (where this and another short passage is cited out of that letter,^a) that the Son is inferior to the Father, for which he quotes those words

^w De decret. Syn. Nic. s. 3. de Syn. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 13.

^x De Eccl. Theol. l. ii. c. 14.

^y Ibid. l. i. c. 9.

^z De Syn. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 17.

^a Act. vi.

of our Saviour, "my Father that sent me is greater than I:" which whether he understood of Christ's mediatory capacity, or extended also to his filial relation, and that too in respect of essence and power, is not sufficiently plain from that place. And then for the other expression, that the Son himself is God indeed, but not the true God, it is barely repeated; though we may rationally suppose, he directly referred in it to that saying of Christ, "That they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." And himself abundantly clears this matter, when he tells us, that Marcellus charged him with holding,^b not that there was only one God, but that there was only one true God; as if he allowed other gods that were not truly and properly so. But he denies the charge, that ever he affirmed the Father to be the only true God, and appeals to his own words; and assures us, he had only quoted that forementioned text. And he complains of the same person,^c that he accused him of holding Christ to be a mere man, for no other cause, than that in one of his letters he had made use of that place of the apostle, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

XXIII. Nor wanted there some, even in those times, when the loudest clamours were made against him, that stood up in his defence. Not to mention others, who, because of their inclination to Arianism, may be less credited in their testimony; Socrates,^d in a set discourse, by particular passages out of his writings, (besides what we have already alleged,) proves him not to have been guilty of the Arian notions, affirming that it cannot be proved out of his books, that he ascribes beginning of essence to the Son of God, though he frequently uses words relating to his economy or dispensation. Thus Gelasius, bishop of Cyzicum, positively acquits him of this charge,^e and affirms, that if he said or wrote any thing that in the least borders upon Arianism, he did it not with a bad intent, but merely through heedlessness and incircumspection, and that Eusebius himself made good all this in an apologetic discourse, which he published and directed to all the orthodox bishops of the church. As for the second council of Nice, that lays the charge so home and downright upon him, it is the less to be wondered at, when it is remembered,

^b Contr. Marcell. l. i. c. 4. p. 27.

^c Ibid. p. 29.

^d Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 21.

^e Hist. Conc. Nic. l. ii. c. 1.

that the great business of that council being to establish the worship of images, and being pressed by their adversaries, with the authority of Eusebius's letter to the empress Constantia, so full against it, they knew no better way to decline the blow, than by directly charging him to have been an Arian, (though had he been so, it had in that case made nothing against his testimony,) producing only some few fragments to that purpose, and those out of letters written before the determinations of the council of Nice. In the Western church he fared better, scarce any of them (St. Jerome excepted, whose zeal and passion in this, as in many other cases, overswayed his judgment) speaking of him without great honour and reverence: insomuch that he was taken into their calendars and martyrologies, and the highest eulogies and commendations heaped upon him,^f honoured with the title of "saint," and a most blessed priest of holy memory; and in their missals and breviaries had particular lessons, and divine offices appointed for the celebration of his memory. I cannot but commend the moderation of pope Pelagius the second, who, speaking concerning the case of Origen,^g says, that good men may sometimes commend them that are bad; and amongst others instances in our Eusebius, who had written an Apology in behalf of Origen: "Amongst heretics, (says he,) who worse than Origen? And amongst historians, who more honourable than Eusebius?" In this case, he tells us, the church rather expounds the opinion of its faithful servants into a favourable sense, than nicely weighs and racks their words; such a defence as it does not acquit the innocent, so neither does it make the other guilty. Amongst the writers of this latter age, none have fallen upon him with greater severity than Baronius, who, when he has so often plentifully treated his readers at his cost, falls upon him with the fierceness of an enemy, hooking in all occasions to bespatter and reproach him, whether with greater rudeness or ingratitude, it is hard to say. And the case had been the more pardonable, had it been pure zeal for the truth that had engaged him in those smart invectives. But I am afraid it was something else made him so irreconcilably angry with Eusebius, I mean his affirming Constantine the Great to have been baptized at Nicomedia a little before his death,

^f Vid. loca cit. apud Vales. inter Testimonia Vett.

^g Epist. iii. ad Episc. Istr. c. 21. ap. Concill. vol. xii. p. 296. ed. reg.

thereby robbing the church of Rome of the honour of it, and what is worse, of those great gifts and extraordinary privileges and immunities said by him to have been, at the time of his baptism, conferred upon that church. It was this so much provoked the cardinal's choler,^h for this he pelts him with hard names, calls him Arian, cheat, and impostor, affirming, that he feigned this in favour of Constantius, the Arian emperor. But let us see what foundation there is for all this outcry. Eusebius lived at that time, no man of his order greater at court, and was near enough to know the truth of what was done; nay, probably was himself upon the spot amongst those bishops he speaks of, that were called to court, and thereby enabled to give so ready an account of the discourses, and all the particular circumstances of that dying emperor. And suppose him to have had a design to forge such a report, it was not consistent with a man of ordinary either piety or prudence to have published it when the thing was fresh, and so many persons of quality and credit capable to disprove him. Besides, he has all antiquity herein on his side; not to mention particular writers, the Catholic bishops met in the synod at Ariminum not much above twenty years after, attest the same thing in their letter to Constantius,ⁱ that Constantine of happy memory being baptized, went to that state of rest and peace that was reserved for him. Baronius found himself exceedingly gravelled with this testimony, and instead of untying, downright cuts the knot, crying out of falsehood and forgery, confidently affirming, and promising to give up the cause, if he make it not out, that the epistle (though he confesses it to be as we have represented it both in Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret) in that part of it is corrupted, and Constantine foisted in instead of Constans. For that so it should be, he proves (and after so much confidence, his evidence had need be weighty and powerful) from the copy of that synodical epistle, as it is extant in Athanasius. And so indeed it is in the Latin translation of it, but had he looked into the Greek,^k he would have found small cause to rejoice so much in his invention, it being not Constans, but Constantine there, as well as in all other copies of that epistle, and even in the original draught extant in St. Hilary:

^h Vid. Baron. ad Ann. 324. num. 43. et seq.

ⁱ Ap. Socrat. l. ii. c. 37. Sozom. l. iv. c. 18. Theodor. l. ii. c. 18.

^k Vid. Athan. de Syn. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 10.

not to say that the sense of the place necessarily determines it to Constantine the Great. To contend so zealously for a matter (as they account it) of so much importance to their church, one would imagine, that besides endeavouring to disable the authorities that are against it, they should have some very strong positive testimonies to confirm it. And yet, after all, the whole story is built upon no better foundation than the fabulous Acts of St. Silvester, which have no just ground or pillar of truth or probability to support them. I might add, that the story of Constantine's being baptized at Rome is plainly given up by some of greatest note and learning in that church, especially Halloix the Jesuit,^l and Morinus the oratorian,^m though the free declaring his mind in this matter cost Morin no little displeasure in the court of Rome. But I return to Eusebius. Whatever obnoxious passages may be in his writings, would but men bring the same candour and ingenuity that ought to be used towards all controversial writers, were but abatements made for discourses about such abstruse and incomprehensible speculations, were but his expressions allowed the favour of those rules and distinctions which all wise and learned men have agreed on for the explaining the doctrine of the Trinity, and hypostatic union, and such-like unfathomable mysteries; were but his obscure or dangerous expressions, expounded by those that are sound and warrantable, I doubt not but a tolerable account might be given of any passages of this nature, even those that are most doubtful and exceptionable, and which, it must be confessed, will not otherwise bear a rigorous examination.

^l Epist. ad Morin. inter Morin. Epist. xxxiii. ^m Vid. vit. J. Morin. p. 12, 13.

His works.

Extant.

De Præparatione Evangelica, libri 15.
 De Demonstratione Evangelica, libri decem.
 Contra Hieroclem Liber.
 Contra Marcellum, libri duo.
 De Ecclesiastica Theologia, libri tres.
 Chronicon.
 Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ, libri decem.
 De Martyribus Palæstinæ liber singularis.
 De vita Constantini, libri quatuor.
 Oratio de laudibus Constantini.
 De locis Hebraicis.
 Epistola ad Cæsarienses de fide Nicæna.

Not Extant.

De Præparatione Ecclesiastica, libri ———.
 De Demonstratione Ecclesiastica, libri decem.
 Contra Porphyrium, libri 30.
 Ad Stephanum de Evangeliorum dissonantia.
 Περὶ Θεοφανείας, libri quinque.
 In Psalmos 150 Commentarii.
 In Esaiam Commentariorum libri 15.
 Περὶ Τοπικῶν Ὀνομάτων, liber unus.
 Apologiæ pro Origine, libri sex.
 De vita Pamphili, libri tres.

Not Extant.

Antiquorum Martyriorum Collect. libri 11.

Descriptio Basilicæ Hierosolymitanæ.

De Festo Paschali liber.

Ἄρχαιολογία seu ἀρχαιολογική ἱστορία.

Cujus fragmenta duo extant apud Anastasium Sinaitam.

Libri ejus ad Marinum sæpius citantur ab eodem Anastasio.

Doubtful or rather Supposititious.

De fide adv. Sabellium, libri duo.

De Resurrectione liber unus.

De Resurrectione et Ascensione Domini.

De Incorporali et invisibili Deo.

De Incorporali.

De Incorporali Anima.

De Spirituali cogitatu hominis.

Quod Deus Pater incorporalis est.

De eodem.

De eo quod dicit Dominus, Non veni pacem, etc.

De Mandato Domini, Quod dico vobis in aure, etc.

De operibus bonis et malis.

De operibus bonis ex Epist. ii. ad Corinth.

THE LIFE OF SAINT ATHANASIUS, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA.

SECTION I.

HIS ACTS FROM HIS BIRTH TILL THE FIRST CONDEMNATION OF ARIUS
BY THE SYNOD OF ALEXANDRIA.

Alexandria his birth-place. The greatness of that city. His personating a bishop, and administering baptism when a child. The care taken of his education, and being placed under Peter bishop of that see. The breach between Peter and Meletius under the Diocletian persecution. The rise and occasion of the Meletian schism. Arius, who ; his taking part with Meletius. Achilles, how long bishop of Alexandria ; proved not to be the Arian Achilles against Sandius. Alexander's succeeding him in that see, and his advancement stomached by Arius. The various accounts concerning the first occasion of Arius's venting his impious principles, inquired into. What his principles were, represented from the fragments of his own writings. His notions (probably) borrowed from the schools of the degenerate Platonists. His industrious propagating of his doctrine, especially by means of the weaker sex. Condemned by a synod at Alexandria.

THE city of Alexandria, pleasantly situated in a clear and a wholesome air, not far from the Delta, or western canal of the Nile, having the Pharos on a promontory on the one side, and the Maræotic lake on the other, had, during the line of the Ptolemies, been the regal seat of the kings of Egypt, as afterwards the metropolis of the kingdom, and the residence of the *Præfectus Augustalis*, when brought under the Roman power: a city not more ennobled by the greatness of its founder, than proud in the riches of its traffic, the confluence of all nations resorting thither, the fame of its schools, and the learning and eminency of its professors, in which respect it outvied Rome, and rivalled the glory of Athens itself. Nor was it the least addition to its honour, that amongst many other fathers of the

church, illustrious for learning and piety, it gave birth to Athanasius, a person so renowned in the histories of the church: for here was he born about the close of the third century, as is evident from some other periods and passages of his life. His parents (though the silence of antiquity has concealed their names) are said to have been peculiarly eminent for piety and virtue,^a who left no other child but him, as if heaven designed him on purpose to be the sole heir both of their estate and virtue. While he was yet but a youth, and had not outgrown the cares and tutorage of domestic education, he happened (if the story which we are told be sufficiently authentic) to be recommended to public notice upon a very remarkable occasion.

II. The church of Alexandria kept an anniversary commemoration of the martyrdom of St. Peter,^b their late bishop, who a little before had suffered under the Diocletian persecution. This festival, Alexander, newly advanced to that see, now celebrated; when the public solemnities of the day being over, he was returned to his house, which stood by the sea-side, whither he had invited his clergy to dine with him: of whose coming, while he was in expectation looking out at a window, he found himself entertained with no displeasing diversion. A company of youths playing together on the shore, were fallen upon a humour of fancying themselves an ecclesiastic college. Athanasius, the ripest probably both in parts and years, personated the bishop; some were presbyters, others deacons, others represented catechumens and *competentes*, who sued to be initiated with the holy rites. Hitherto Alexander was well enough contented with the childrens' sport, but when he saw them take upon them to administer what he thought resembled the sacred and solemn rites of the church, and the most hidden and concealed mysteries of religion, he sent some of the clergy (who by this time were come) to inquire into the meaning of the action. The children affrighted at first, began to deny what they had done, affirming that there was no more in it than common sport, but being severely pressed, confessed the mystery of the whole childish scene: that Athanasius had sustained the place of a bishop, and had baptized some children whom they presented to him, who

^a Vit. Athan. Oper. ejus. vol. ii. p. 518. ed. 1600.

^b Rufin. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 14. Socrat. l. i. c. 15. Sozom. l. ii. c. 17. Vit. Athan. ap. Phot. Cod. CCLVIII. Vit. Athan. ubi supr. p. 519.

had not been baptized before. This put him upon inquiring farther into the manner and circumstances of that affair, and whether it had been managed by the usual way of interrogations and answers, and finding that every thing had been exactly done according to the custom and constitutions of the church, upon advice with his clergy it was concluded, that the children so initiated should not be rebaptized, but only consummated by confirmation. And having sent for Athanasius's parents, and those of the rest, who had wantonly usurped the place of the clergy, he delivered them to them with a solemn charge to give them such education as might fit them for the ministry of the church, and the discharge of that office which in sport they had taken upon them. Athanasius hereupon was consigned to masters and tutors, and being sufficiently perfected in human arts and studies, his parents returned him to the bishop, who took him into his family, used him as his secretary and amanuensis, to read to him and write for him; and when maturity of age had qualified him for it, ordained him deacon; and finding his parts brisk and pregnant, and his zeal vigorous and sincere, took him into his most private councils,^c used his assistance in his most important controversies and affairs, carried him along with him to the council of Nice, where, in all his contests with Arius, and his constant conflicts with the party afterwards, he shewed himself a stout and able champion of the Catholic cause. For the clearer understanding of which affair, it being the great transaction of his whole life, we must step back a-while, that we may derive the notices of things from the fountain-head.

III. Peter, bishop of Alexandria, succeeded Theonas in that see, Ann. Chr. 300, or at most but the year before. And scarce had he sitten three years quietly in the chair, when the Diocletian persecution overtook the church, wherein he, with many more of note and quality, was apprehended and cast into prison, in which number was Meletius, bishop of Lycus in Thebais, a person, next Peter, of greatest authority and power, and under him director-general of all the affairs of the church. The severity of the persecution (so Epiphanius relates the story,^d though nowhere more confused and careless than in the Meletian and Arian relations, and in this case reporting things not very con-

^c Vid. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 6. et Gelas. Cyz. Hist. Conc. Nic. l. ii. c. 11.

^d Adv. Melet. Hæres. lxxviii. c. 2.

sistently with other writers of those times) tempted many of all orders of men to renounce the faith, and comply with the Gentile rites, who repenting afterwards of what they had done, applied themselves to the martyrs and confessors in prison for absolution, that they might be restored to peace and communion with the church. This Meletius and others would by no means yield to, affirming it would set open the door to apostacy from the Christian faith, if, when men had lapsed into idolatry, they might at their return find so ready entertainment. Peter, acted with the resentments and compassion of a common father, was for the more mild and moderate opinion, that a time of penance being assigned, they might be re-admitted into the church, lest affliction be added to the afflicted, and men being put upon a desperate issue might be tempted to a total and final apostacy from Christianity. But not being able to prevail either by arguments or entreaties, he hung up his mantle across the prison, crying out, "they that are of my side, let them come hither; they that are for Meletius, let them go to him." Whereupon a few bishops and others came over to him, the greatest part remaining with Meletius: which widened the difference into such a breach, that ever after they parted companies, and in all acts of divine worship kept their separate assemblies. But it was not long before Meletius himself stood in need of that mercy which he had so rigidly denied to others, being, through the infirmity of his faith, betrayed to offer sacrifice to idols; which, though not mentioned by Epiphanius, (who doubtless transcribed his reports out of the Acts of the Meletians, which may justly be presumed partial in their own cause,) is yet by a much better author, I mean Athanasius himself,^e who adds, that for this, and some other crimes, whereof he stood convict, (meaning, I suppose, his schismatical proceedings,) Peter, in a common meeting of bishops, deposed him from his order. The issue was, Peter received the crown of martyrdom; Meletius, being got out of prison, still bore up himself with the power and reputation of a bishop, ordaining bishops, presbyters, and deacons wherever he came, erecting churches for his own party, and refusing to communicate with the other; each party distinguishing their assemblies by an inscription over their church-doors; those who belonged to Peter, and possessed the churches of the old founda-

^e Apol. c. Arian. s. 59. Soerat. l. i. c. 6.

tions, entitling themselves, "the Catholic Church;" those of Meletius, "the Church of the Martyrs." This schism commenced anno 306, Meletius vomiting up nothing but railings and reproaches against Peter and his successors, complaining how much he had been injured by them. How far he and his party were censured in the Nicene synod, and what were their conspiracies and combinations against Athanasius, we may hear more afterwards.

IV. Amongst others that went along with the Meletian schism, was Arius, the son of Amonius, a Libyan by birth, (a country fruitful in monstrous and unnatural productions,) though Photius and some others expressly make him an Alexandrian:^f a man of a subtle and versatile wit, of a turbulent and unquiet head, but which he veiled with a specious mask of sanctity. Upon his deserting the Meletian party,^g he was made deacon by Peter; but disliking afterwards the bishop's severe proceedings against Meletius, was rejected and expelled the church. A little before Peter's suffering, he mightily solicited to be again restored to his place. But Peter knew the temper of the man too well to hearken to it; and if the Acts of his martyrdom,^h of no inconsiderable antiquity, be of any credit, he was expressly forbidden it by a vision from heaven; our Lord appearing to him in the form of a beautiful youth, with a bright shining countenance, clad in a linen coat, torn all in pieces from top to bottom. And when the good bishop asked who had thus rent his garment, he answered, it was Arius had done it; and withal charged him not to admit him to communion: great and powerful intercession would be made for him to that end, but he should not do it, but should give the like charge to Achilles and Alexander, his presbyters, who were to be his successors. The next day came a great crowd of presbyters and deacons to the prison,ⁱ (whom Arius had engaged to speak for him,) earnestly importuning the bishop for his absolution. No sooner had they mentioned his name, but he interrupted them; "Arius (said he) shall be separated from the glory of God, both in this world, and in that which is to come, even as he himself separated the Son of God

^f Epist. i. ad Mich. Bulg. p. 4.

^g Sozom. l. i. c. 15.

^h Act. Martyr. S. Petr. Gr. Lat. à Combef. edit. p. 197. et ex iis Nicet. Thes. Orth. Fid. l. v. c. 1. confer. Anastas. Sinait. 'Οδηγ. c. 5.

ⁱ Act. Martyr. à Combef. p. 193, etc.

from the glory and co-essentiality of the Father;" (though he did not actually do this till afterwards;) and taking Achilles and Alexander aside, he acquainted them with his vision, and imparted to them the same charge that had been delivered to him. Peter being consummated by martyrdom, Achilles one of the presbyters of that church succeeded him; a man grave and pious, but of a more calm and easy disposition than his predecessor: an advantage which Arius knew how to improve, and accordingly, upon the profession of his repentance, was restored, yea and advanced to the order of a presbyter, one of the churches of Alexandria, called Baucalis, being assigned to him for his cure; for it was the constitution of that place,^j that every presbyter in that church should have a particular parish-church in the city allotted him, where he communicated and taught the people. Besides all which, (if an ancient writer may be believed,^k) Achilles made him regent of the catechetical school at Alexandria. But Achilles lived not long in that honourable place, but three months, says Epiphanius, though mistaking the order of his succession;^l five, says Gelasius Cyzicenus; but a little while,^m so Theodoret;ⁿ and certainly it could not well be above a year at most, which is the time that Nicephorus of Constantinople assigns to him. Though I believe the reader will think what the author of the Oriental Chronicon says in this case,^o to savour of more zeal than truth, that the reason why God took away Achilles in so short a time, (six months he allows him,) was for his imprudent re-admitting Arius into the church. And here I cannot but remark the ignorant, or rather wilful mistake of a late author, the historical advocate for the Arian cause;^p who makes this venerable bishop the same with that Achilles that sided with Arius in his innovations; which he confidently puts beyond all doubt. And because he could not but see that Arius never vented his opinion, till after Alexander was come into the chair of that church; he adds, that Alexander deposed and thrust out Achilles: a piece of confidence, for which he offers not the least shadow of probability, as indeed it is most plainly repugnant to all the writers of that time; not once in-

^j Epiph. Hæres. lxi. c. 1. Sozom. l. i. c. 15.

^k Patric. Arars. lib. Ocean. diet. in Synodic. Gr. Lat. à Pap. edit. p. 14.

^l Hæres. lxi. c. 11.

^m Hist. Conc. Nic. l. i. c. 1.

ⁿ Lib. i. c. 2.

^o Ap. Combef. not. in Act. Petr. p. 226.

^p Sand. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. p. 8.

timated, that I know of, by any author, except only the Arabian historian,^q whose accounts of things, when differing from more ancient writers, are generally too idle and trifling for any prudent man to rely upon them. Not to say, that Theodoret makes the Arian Achilles to have been of no higher order than a deacon;^r and, admit him with others to have been a presbyter, yet incredible is it, that there should be no tidings of his deposition, especially when in the same list with him and others condemned by Alexander, Secundus and Theonas are reckoned up, and particularly said to have been bishops heretofore.^s Besides, that Athanasius styles our bishop the great Achilles;^t a title which he would not have bestowed upon him, had he either joined with Arius, or done any thing that might make him obnoxious to be deposed from his episcopal station. But the error is too gross to deserve a confutation.

V. To Achilles succeeded Alexander, one whom for his piety, justice, candour and courtesy, kindness to all, and charity to the poor, both clergy and people had in great veneration. But impossible it is to please all, Arius secretly stomached the election, that one to whom he thought himself no whit inferior, should be preferred before him. And this is generally supposed to have given the first occasion to his starting aside,^u and to his after-innovations in the church. It is true the Arian historian gives quite another account of it,^w that at the election, when the greater number of suffrages were for Arius, he modestly gave Alexander the precedence, and transferred his votes over to him: a thing so contrary to the proud and turbulent spirit of the man, that it needs no more to make it seem improbable, if Philostorgius's known partiality to the cause did not render it suspected. Alexander for some time had Arius in good esteem, who in the mean-while went on in his parish-cure, where he began to vent his heretical notions,^x as did also Collythus, Carpones, and Sarmatas, presbyters of particular churches in the same city; who, by dispersing different doctrines amongst their people, drew them several ways, each party styling itself after the name of its teacher; some Collythians, others Arians: of all which Alexander is said to have been ignorant, till Meletius (who though

^q Eutyech. Annal. vol. i. p. 541.

^r Lib. i. c. 4.

^s Ap. Soerat. l. i. c. 6.

^t Epist. ad Episc. Ægypt. et Lib. s. 23.

^u Theodor. l. i. c. 2.

^v Hæres. Fab. l. vii. c. 1.

^w Niciph. l. viii. c. 5.

^x Philost. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 3.

^y Epiph. Hæres. lxxviii. c. 4. lxxix. c. 2.

schismatical in practice, was sound in the faith) came to him and gave him notice of it, desiring a speedy stop might be put to it: accordingly Arius was sent for, and being examined concerning the matter, at first sight confessed it, and stood to it: a passage, I am apt to think, told by the Meletians in favour of their bishop, and from them borrowed by Epiphanius. Indeed the first occasion of Arius's discovery of himself, is somewhat differently related. Most probable it is, that Arius, not knowing whence else to pick a quarrel with his diocesan, took occasion to censure and impugn his doctrine. For Alexander, on a time,^y in the presence of his presbyters, and the rest of his clergy, somewhat boldly discoursed concerning the holy Trinity, affirming, that in the Trinity there was an Unity. This Arius presently laid hold on, and supposing the bishop to have meant it in the Sabellian sense, run himself into the contrary extreme, eagerly disputing against it to this effect; that if the Father begat the Son, then the Son had a beginning of subsistence, and consequently that there was a time when he was not a Son, and therefore proceeded out of nothing. The controversy, thus unhappily started, quickly engaged many on either side, for the allaying whereof, Alexander caused several meetings, wherein the matter might be debated, himself moderating in the several disputations: in one of which it was, (if there was any foundation for what Philostorgius^z and Nicephorus^a report,) that Alexander, surnamed Baucalis or Crook-backed, an Alexandrian presbyter, being vexed that Arius had sometime been preferred before him, charged him home for an innovator in the faith. For the ending of which contest, Alexander invited them to canvass the matter by fair and amicable discourses, which being done in several disputes according to the circumstances of their disputation, he sometimes inclined to one, and sometimes to another, till at last he positively determined against those doctrines which Arius had maintained. Hence it is, that Constantine the Great, in a letter jointly written to Alexander and Arius,^b blames them both; the one for propounding nice and subtle questions to his presbyters, the other for returning answers concerning things never to be thought of, or, if once thought of, to be immediately stifled in the profoundest silence.

^y Socrat. l. i. c. 5.

^z Philost. l. i. c. 3.

^a Niceph. l. viii. c. 5. conf. Sozom. l. i. c. 15. ^b Ap. Euseb. de vit. Const. l. ii. c. 69.

VI. Before we proceed any farther in the course of the story, it will not be amiss to inquire into the true state of the controversy, and to fix the notion of the Arian principles, wherein we shall not take our measures merely from the account of his adversaries, who may be suspected sometimes more partially to represent them; but from what of his own epistles and writings is yet extant, which, as well as the nature of such things will bear, we will endeavour to describe in his own words. And first for the principles which he was charged to oppose; he tells us they were these,^c viz. that God was always, the Son always; the Father together, the Son together; that the Son in an unbegotten way does co-exist with God, being ever begotten; that God does not precede the Son in one minute, no nor so much as in a thought; and that the Son is of God himself. And then for his own principles which he asserted, he declares, that the Son is not unbegotten, nor anyways any part of the unbegotten, that by council and decree he did before all times and ages subsist perfect God, the only begotten, and immutable; and that before he was begotten, or created, or determined, or founded, he was not; that the Son had a beginning, but that God was without all beginning; and that he therefore affirmed him to proceed out of a state of non-existence, as being no part of God, nor of any subject-matter: that when he styled God unbegotten,^d it was to distinguish him from that nature that was begotten; when without beginning, from him that had a beginning; when eternal, from him that did exist in time: that he who is without beginning, has set his Son as the beginning of the things that are made, having made or adopted him to be his Son, who has of himself nothing of the peculiar subsistence of God, being neither equal to him,^e nor co-essential with him: that God was not always a Father, but there was a time when he was only God, and was not yet a Father; that afterwards he became a Father, and that the Son was not always such; for since all things were made of nothing, and that all things are created and made, the Word of God itself must be made out of nothing, and was not before he was made, but had a beginning, when he was created; there being a time when there was

^c Epist. ad Euseb. Nicom. ap. Theodor. l. i. c. 5.

^d Excerpt. ex Arii Tbalia ap. Athan. de Syn. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 15.

^e Id. c. Arian. Orat. i. s. 5.

nothing but God, and afterwards the Word and Wisdom; and that when at length God was resolved to create us, he then made one, whom he called Word, Son, and Wisdom, by whom he did create us: that the Son has nothing peculiar of the Father's substance,^f but that he is a workmanship and a creature, and not true God, but only by participation, and as he is made God: that there is a Trinity,^g but not all alike in majesty, whose subsistences are unmingled with one another, one being more immensely glorious than another, and that the Father, as being without beginning, is as to his essence different from the Son: that, in short, the Father is invisible, ineffable, incomprehensible to the Son; and that it is evident, that that which has a beginning can never throughly understand or comprehend the nature and quality of that which is without beginning: that there are three subsistences,^h and that God, as being the cause of all, is alone without beginning; that the Son was begotten of the Father without time, and made and settled before time, but was not before he was begotten, and as such did alone subsist with the Father; that he is not eternal, nor co-eternal, nor begotten together with the Father, nor has the same Being with him, as some affirm, introducing two unbegotten principles; but as God is Unity, and the principle of all things, so he is before them, and consequently before the Son. From all which it appears, what Arius asserted, viz. that God was, before he was a Father; that he was before the Son, not only in order of nature, but of time; that the Son, though begotten of him, has not the same essence, power, and glory with him; not made of his substance, or at all partaking of his nature, or existing in his essence, but altogether different, both in nature and power, though formed to the perfect likeness of it; as Eusebius of Nicomedia speaks out, in his letter to Paulinus bishop of Tyre:ⁱ that what subsistence he had from eternity, was *θελήματι καὶ βουλῇ*, by the will and council of God; that he is a God by constitution, and as the Father imparts some divinity to him; and that he was made, created, and established, though in a more sublime and mysterious way, than any part of the creation.^j

^f Athan. c. Arian. Orat. i. s. 9.

^g De Syn. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 15.

^h Arii Epist. ad Alex. ibid. s. 16.

ⁱ Ap. Theodor. l. i. c. 6.

^j De Platoniorum Trinitate videsis D. Cudworth plenissime et doctiss. dissententem. lib. i. de System. univers. c. 4.

If it shall be asked, whence Arius derived these notions, probable it is, he took the hint from the doctrine of the later Platonists, who at this time governed the schools at Alexandria. For although the ancient doctrine of the Platonic Trinity, asserting three divine *hypostases*, the *τῶν ἀθανάτων*, the *νοῦς* or *λόγος*, and the *ψυχὴ*, all eternal, necessarily existent, undestroyable, and in a manner infinite, and which had a common *τὸ θεῖον*, or Deity, though this scheme, rightly stated, gave little, if any encouragement to the principles of Arius, yet the junior Platonists of that time, out of spite to Christianity, (to which the old scheme did too near approach,) began to depart from the ancient doctrine of Plato in this matter, stretching the differences, and gradual subordination, which the elder Platonists had made amongst the *hypostases*, into too wide a distance, particularly they made the third *hypostasis* to be *ψυχὴ ἐγκόσμιος*, the immediate soul of the world, informing and acting all parts of the creation, thereby blending God and the creature together, or rather debasing the Deity into the rank of creatures. Now Arius having been brought up in the schools of Alexandria, and being a person of a quick subtle wit, easily caught up these notions, and adapting them to the Christian Trinity, began to assert so wide a distance between the first and second person, (for as yet nothing was said concerning the third,) as plainly to degrade it into the form of created beings, though still sheltering himself under ambiguous expressions. And for this attempt he was not a little prepared by the principles which he had sucked in from Lucian of Antioch, (though whether at the first or second hand it is hard to say,) concerning the person of our blessed Saviour, whom he maintained to be no more than a mere man, which Lucian himself had derived from Paul of Samosata. For that Arius was one of that tribe, we shall see by and by.

VII. These impious and pernicious principles, which Arius propagated both by word and writing, were greedily entertained by persons of loose and instable minds, as indeed the minds of men are naturally disposed to novel and curious opinions, and men are most apt to admire what they do not understand. Arius, like a man that was resolved to go on with what he had begun, preached diligently at his church,^k and liberally scattered his notions amongst the people, and not there only, but diffused the

^k Theodor. l. i. c. 2.

venom in all public meetings and conferences where he came, and that no method of a subtle heretic might be left unattempted, went home to their houses, and, by crafty insinuations, gained proselytes to his doctrine: by which means he soon made himself a considerable interest amongst the common people, and had drawn over to him seven hundred women that professed virginity,¹ and gained footing amongst the guides themselves, and those both of the inferior and superior order, not only in Alexandria, but Pentapolis, and the parts thereabouts. It was high time for Alexander to have his eyes about him, while the envious man thus sowed the tares. He had treated the man by all prudent and gentle methods, by wise counsels, and friendly admonition, if by any means he might reduce him to a right mind. But the stubborn heretic was not to be wrought upon by arts of kindness, and was therefore to be cut off by public censures. In order whereunto Alexander^m summoned a synod of all the bishops under his jurisdiction, who met at Alexandria, and having examined the matter, condemned his doctrine, deprived him of his ministerial station, and expelled him, with nine more of his adherents, out of the church.

SECTION II.

HIS ACTS FROM ARIUS'S FIRST CONDEMNATION TILL THE COUNCIL OF NICE.

Arius's great endeavours to recommend and support his cause. The sum of Alexander's letter to Alexander of Byzantium, concerning Arius, his principles, abettors, and condemnation. Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, Arius's great patron. Collucianists, who, and why so called. Arius's letter of complaint to Eusebius, who writes letters in his behalf. The intercession of the synod of Bithynia. He is admitted by the Palestine bishops. Condemned a second time at Alexandria. Alexander's encyclical epistle about his proceedings against Arius. The ill effects of the disputes about these matters. Arius's flight into Palestine, and reception there, and at Nicomedia. His attempt to reconcile himself to his own bishop. Constantine's trouble at these divisions of the church: his letter to Alexander and Arius. Hosius, sent by him to Alexandria, not employed in these affairs as the pope's legate, shewed against Baronius. A synod holden by him at Alexandria, but without any good effect.

ARIUS, though depressed by the public sentence of the synod, yet was so far from being discouraged in the prosecution of his cause,

¹ Epiph. Hæres. lxix. c. 3.

^m Epiph. Hæres. lxxviii. c. 4. lxix. c. 3.

that he pursued it with more life and vigour than before. What he could no longer do by his public ministry in the church, he carried on by clancular and private arts,ⁿ setting up conventicles for his party, mingling himself with every company, and starting opportunities of discourse, running up and down both in city and country, and filling all places with clamours against Alexander, and the synodical censures. Nay, the very women whom he had inveigled over to his party, immodestly ran up and down the streets and highways, to tell tales for him in every corner, to plead his cause, and promote his interest; some of them taking upon them to solicit the justice of the public tribunals, to take cognizance of his case, and to rescind the sentence of his diocesan, creating the aged and venerable bishop all imaginable trouble and disturbance. By these and such-like artifices he daily increased and got ground at home, himself all the while successfully fishing in the troubled waters. Abroad he supported and advanced his reputation by frequent messages and despatches, by writing to several of the most noted and eminent bishops of the East, to whom he so dressed up his notions, disguised his affairs, put so specious and plausible a colour upon his cause, that some of them openly appeared in his behalf, and most sent to Alexander to mediate a peace and reconciliation, the thing which Arius pretended he most desired. By this means Alexander found it necessary to make public, what he had hitherto suppressed and stifled, the true state of the case, writing to most of the Eastern bishops. His letter to Alexander bishop of Byzantium, (for to him Theodoret expressly says it was written, otherwise I should for some reasons have guessed it to have been Alexander bishop of Thessalonica,) is yet extant,^o “Wherein he first complains that Arius and his party had, upon ill designs, and by ill arts, advanced and introduced an impious heresy into the church, a doctrine as destructive to the deity of the Son of God, as that of either Jews or Gentiles, which they securely vented in those dens of thieves to which they had betaken themselves, and wherein they skulked day and night: and not content with this, began to promote an open schism and sedition, making use of the disorderly women, whom they had seduced over to their side, to propagate their faction in every corner, yea, and to prefer indictments against him before the

ⁿ Alex. Ep. ap. Theod. l. i. c. 4. Epiph. Hæres. lxi. c. 4. ^o Ap. Theod. *ibid.*

civil magistrates. And though by reason of their clancular actings he had somewhat late discovered them, yet had he synodically condemned, and cast them out of the Catholic church; but so far were they from acquiescing in that sentence, that they dispersed themselves abroad, and by flattery and dissimulation had so far imposed upon foreign bishops, as to procure large letters of commendation from them, which they made use of to great advantage; nay, by some they had been admitted to communion, whose rashness herein was to be blamed. Next, he exposes the impiety of their principles, concerning the divine nature, and eternal existence of the Son of God; and shews at what places of scripture they took sanctuary to defend themselves; all which he refutes at large with admirable clearness and dexterity, and withal states the Catholic doctrine in this matter. Then he proceeds to inquire into the original of these men's principles, which he shews to have been first brooded and hatched by Ebion and Artemas, afterwards nourished by Paul of Samosata, then by Lucian of Antioch, the very dregs of whose opinion had been drank in, and vomited up by Arius, Achilles, and the rest; wherein they had received but too much encouragement from the three Syrian bishops, (he means Eusebius of Cæsarea, Paulinus of Tyre, and Theodotus of Laodicea,) whose case he wished might be canvassed and examined. That for himself, it was no wonder if after so many bold reflections upon the Son of God, and the divesting him of his divinity, they should liberally bestow their scorn, their slanders, and calumnies upon him and his party, and decry them as a company of ignorant and illiterate fellows, boasting that all wisdom dwelt with them, and that they had discovered truths that had been hidden from ages and generations, and which had never so much as entered into the thoughts of any but of themselves alone. This he cries out upon as a most impious arrogance, and an unmeasurable madness, a piece of pride kindled by the Devil, which neither the divine demonstration of scripture, nor the unanimous consent of bishops in the doctrine of Christ, was able to restrain; nay, that herein they outdid the impiety of the Devil, who durst not utter one word to blaspheme the Son of God. Hence he goes on to declare his belief in all the great articles of the creed, both concerning God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; the one catholic and apostolic church, the resurrection of the

dead, founded in that of our Lord Jesus Christ, who truly, and not in appearance, took our flesh upon him, and was born of Mary the mother of God, (ἐκ τῆς Θεοτόκου Μαρίας.) and in the end of the world came hither for the expiation of sin, who was crucified, and died, (though without any impairing, or disparagement to his godhead,) rose again from the dead, was taken up into heaven, and set down at the right hand of the divine Majesty. This was the doctrine he taught and preached, this the apostolic faith of the church, for which he was ready to lay down his life, little regarding the opposition that was made against it by Arius and his accomplices, enemies of the truth, who were therefore expelled the church, according to St. Paul's sentence in the case, 'that if any one, yea though pretending himself 'an angel from heaven, should preach any other gospel than what they had received, he should be accursed.' In conclusion he advises him, that he would keep a vigilant eye upon them, who, under a pretence of peace and piety, laboured to insinuate themselves in all parts, that he would give them no entertainment, who had been regularly expelled and cast out of the church, but by letters would testify his agreement in the apostolic doctrine, and his approbation of what he had acted against those gainsayers, as great numbers had done in all provinces, as he might see by the account which by Appion his deacon he then sent to him." This is the sum of that very prolix letter, which though particularly directed to the bishop of Byzantium, yet (as is plain from several passages in it) was intended to be of a more general concernment, and that copies of it (as no doubt they were) should be communicated to all the neighbour bishops. To the same effect he wrote to Philogonius,^p bishop of Antioch, Eustathius of Beræa, and many more, to the number in all from first to last of seventy epistles, which, together with their answers, were carefully collected and kept together; as were also those of Arius and his side, and laid up in the several repositories of each party, whence the writers of those times furnished themselves with materials for the transactions of that age.

II. Amongst those to whom Arius addressed himself, the chief was Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, the head and champion of the cause. He had sometime been bishop of Berytus in

^p Theodor. l. i. c. 4. Epiph. Hæres. lxxix. c. 4. Socrat. l. i. c. 6.

Syria, and thence translated to Nicomedia, which being at that time the seat of the Eastern emperors, gave him a fair opportunity to ingratiate himself with the great ministers of state, and to render himself considerable for power and interest at court. He was a man of parts and learning, of a subtle and a daring temper, but of a head deeply infected with those principles which Arius had newly broached to the world; for which we are to know, that Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch, in the declining part of the foregoing age, had been by a synod deposed for some heretical doctrines concerning the Trinity, and the Person of the Son of God. These principles, with some improvements and alterations, Lucian, who was born at the same town of Samosata, and about the same time presbyter also of the church of Antioch, took up, and so stiffly maintained, that for many years, during the entire presidency of the three succeeding bishops,⁹ he withdrew himself from the communion of the church; though towards the end of his life, he probably retracted his errors, and suffered martyrdom under the late persecution. Disciples he had many, whom he had trained up in his erroneous opinion, who held together in so strict a fraternity,^r that they distinguished themselves by the name of *Συλλουκιανιστᾶι*, Fellow-Lucianists, by which title Arius styles Eusebius in his letter to him. For indeed Eusebius was one of Lucian's principal scholars, who so strenuously defended his master's principles, that he made all his interest subservient to it. To him therefore Arius directs a letter, which he sent by his father Ammonius,^s wherein he salutes him with the titles of "the most desirable Lord, the man of God, the faithful and orthodox Eusebius." In it he complains of Alexander's severe and unjust proceedings against him, merely for his defence of truth, that he turned every stone to do him mischief, and had expelled him for not subscribing to principles which he could not own; and not him only, but had denounced an anathema against Eusebius of Cæsarea, Theodotus, Paulinus, Gregorius, and other Eastern bishops, (not that Alexander had particularly condemned any of these, but only under the general name of friends and favourers of the Arian cause,) desiring his favour, and to be mindful of those troubles, which his zeal for truth had brought

⁹ Alex. Epist. ap. Theodor. ubi supr.

^r Philost. l. vii. c. 14, 15.

^s Ext. ap. Theodor. l. i. c. 5. et ap. Epiph. Hæres. lxi. c. 6.

upon him. Eusebius, forward enough to undertake the patronage of the cause, writes several times to Alexander about this matter,^t magisterially requiring him to loose the band of excommunication, and restore Arius to communion, as one whose sentiments were sound and orthodox. And not content with this, he presently writes to Paulinus of Tyre,^u chiding him for his silence and negligence; and pressing him to write to Alexander, as hoping his intercession might prevail. Vexed to see that nothing was done by all this importunity, he summoned a synod of the Bithynian bishops,^v where letters were written to the bishops of other parts, that they would communicate with Arius and his adherents, as persons sound in the faith, and use their endeavours with Alexander to receive them again into the church. But the good bishop stood firm and immovable as a rock, deaf to all such importunities; which Arius perceiving, sent agents to the bishops of Palestine, desiring that by their sentence he might be allowed to assemble his congregation, as aforetime he had done. The bishops being met, assented to his petition, but, withal, charged him and his fellows to behave themselves with all due reverence and submission to their own bishop.

III. Elated with the letters and interposals of so many and such potent intercessors, Arius behaved himself with greater arrogance than before. He boasted of his great alliances, and the numbers of those that consented with him, shewed the letters that had been written to him and in his behalf, proceeded confidently in his seditious meetings, and despised his adversaries as simple and illiterate. To repress whose insolence, Alexander found it necessary to convene a second synod at Alexandria; for that it was distinct from the former, seems evident from the number of the persons sentenced, ten only being condemned in the first, fourteen in this latter synod; two of which, viz. Secundus and Theonas, were Libyan bishops, who, having joined themselves to the Arian party, were now condemned with them. In this synod met near an hundred bishops, out of Egypt and Lybia, who solemnly excommunicated the man and all his partners, declaring them to be fallen from the catholic faith, and cut off from the church of Christ. Accordingly Epiphanius tells

^t Soerat. l. i. c. 6.

^u Ext. Epist. ap. Theodor. l. i. c. 6.

^v Sozom. l. i. c. 15.

us,^v that Arius, after his first condemnation, having stayed a long time at Alexandria, was at length apprehended, and brought *εἰς ἔλεγχον ἐν τῇ πόλει, καὶ ἐκκήρυκτος γεγίνηται*, to a conviction or confutation in the city, and by public proclamation proscribed and banished. Of these proceedings Alexander presently published an account, and as before he had written to particular bishops, so now he wrote a more general and encyclical epistle, directed to all the bishops and governors of the church,^w calling upon them, as members of the same body, to entertain a compassionate sympathy with the state of his church.

This epistle is much shorter than that heretofore written to Alexander, and containing a brief, but true state of the controversy then on foot, we shall here set it down.

“To our dear and venerable brethren, our colleagues in the ministry of the catholic church wheresoever dispersed, Alexander in the Lord greeting. Forasmuch as the body of the catholic church is but one, and that we are commanded in the holy scriptures to keep the bond of peace and concord, it is very fit that we should write to you, and that whatever passes amongst us, should be mutually communicated to one another, so that whether one member suffer, we also may suffer with it; or one member rejoice, we may rejoice with it. Know therefore that within our diocese, certain bad men, enemies to Christ, are risen up, who propagate an apostacy; which a man may very truly judge and style the forerunner of Antichrist. Desirous I was to have stifled and concealed this matter, that the venom might have been kept only within these apostates, and so have expired; and not spread itself abroad into other parts, and infect the minds of the simple. But since Eusebius, now bishop of Nicomedia, (who presumes that the disposal of all ecclesiastic affairs is lodged with him, especially since, having deserted Berytus, he has possessed himself of the see of Nicomedia, without being prosecuted for it as a violator of the canons; since he) hath undertaken the patronage of the apostates, and has written letters in their commendation into all parts, to seduce unwary and undiscerning persons to this execrable and anti-christian heresy; I thought it necessary, considering what is written in

^v Adv. Hæres. lxi. c. 4.

^w Ext. ap. Socrat. l. i. c. 6. et Gelas. Cyz. Hist. Conc. Nic. l. ii. c. 3.

the law, to be no longer silent, but to acquaint you all with the state of things, that you may both know the apostates themselves, and understand the unhappy terms and expressions of this heresy, and that if Eusebius have written to any of you, you may give no heed to it. By these persons he endeavours to broach and bring to light that corrupt and perverse mind, which he has a long time concealed, and though he pretends he only writes in their behalf, yet he sufficiently declares he does it upon his own account. The names of those who have thus apostatized are these, Arius, Achilles, Aithales, Carpones, another Arius, Sarmates, Euzoius, Lucius, Julianus, Menas, Helladius, Gaius; and, together with them, Secundus and Theonas, heretofore accounted bishops. The doctrines which they have started, without any ground from scripture, and which they publicly vent, are these: God (say they) was not always a Father, but there was a time when he was God, but not Father: the Word of God was not always, but sprang out of nothing. For he that was God, made him that was not, out of that which was not; and therefore there was a time, when he was not. For the Son is a creature, and the workmanship of God; neither in essence like to the Father, nor the true and natural Word, or Wisdom of the Father, but one of the creatures that were made, and is only improperly styled the Word and Wisdom: forasmuch as he himself was made by the genuine Word of God, and by that wisdom that is in God, by which God made him as well as all other things. Upon this account he is in his own nature mutable and alterable, as all rational creatures are. He is a Word foreign, and separated from the essence of God. The Father is incomprehensible and ineffable to the Son; who neither perfectly and accurately knows him, nor is able perfectly to behold him. Nay, the Son understands not his own substance, of what kind it is. For he was made for our sakes, that by him, as by an instrument, God might create us: nor had he ever had any being, had not God designed to create us. And when they were asked, whether the Word of God might change, as the Devil did, they blushed not to reply, he might do so; for being made and created, he must be of a mutable nature. While therefore Arius and his party discoursed at this rate, and impudently preached these things up and down, we, with the bishops of Egypt and Libya, to the number of near an hundred, met in a synod, where we anathematized them, and all that adhered to

them. Notwithstanding which, Eusebius and his followers gave them entertainment, endeavoured to blend falsehood with truth, and to confound impiety and religion. But they shall be able to do nothing: for truth is mighty, and will overcome; neither 'is there any communion of light with darkness, or any concord of Christ with Belial.' Who ever heard of such things as these before? Or who is there that hears them now, and does not stand amazed, and stop his ears, that they may not be defiled with such wretched and infectious discourses? Who can hear St. John say, 'In the beginning was the Word,' and not presently condemn those that assert, that there was a time when he was not? Or who can hear those expressions in the Gospel, 'the only begotten Son,' and, 'by him all things were made,' but he must abominate those that affirm, that the Son is one of the creatures? For how can he be one of those things which himself made? Or how can he be the only begotten, who, according to them, is levelled with the rank of all created beings? How can he arise out of nothing, when the Father assures us, 'my heart hath sent forth a good Word;'^x and elsewhere, 'from the womb, before the day-spring, have I begotten thee?'^y Or how is he in substance unlike the Father, when he is 'the perfect image and brightness of his Father,' and has himself told us, 'he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father?' How can the Son be the Word and Wisdom of God, if there was a time when he was not? For it is as if they should say, there was a time when God was without wisdom and reason. How can he be liable to change and alteration, when he tells us of himself, 'I am in the Father, and the Father in me?' and, 'I and the Father are one;' and by the prophet, 'behold, I am, and I change not?' And though some may refer this expression to the Father, yet may it now be more conveniently understood of the Son; for that being become man, he is not changed, but, as the apostle says, 'Jesus Christ, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever.' But what was it induced them to affirm, that he was made for us, when St. Paul testifies, 'for whom, and by whom, are all things?' As for their blasphemous asserting, that the Son does not perfectly know the Father, no man ought to wonder at it. For having once proclaimed war against Christ, they easily set at nought his words, that tell us, 'as the Father knows me,

^x Psalm xliv. 1. juxta Septuag.

^y Psalm cix. 4. Septuag.

so know I the Father.' If therefore the Father knows the Son in part, plain it is, that the Son also in part knows the Father. But if it be unlawful to affirm that, and if the Father perfectly knows the Son, it is most evident, that in the same manner that the Father knows his Word, in the same does the Word know his Father, whose Word he is. With these arguments, and the frequent urging of the holy scriptures, we have often convinced and silenced them. But they, chameleon-like, presently again changed colour, making good in themselves that which is written; that when the wicked is come to the bottom of evil, he will still despise. Many heresies have arisen before these, which, attempting more than was meet, have fallen into folly and madness. But these men, by their attempts to destroy the divinity of the Word, which is the scope and design of all their discourses, have justified all those ancient heresies, and do themselves much nearer approach to Antichrist. For which cause they are anathematized, and cut off from the church. We are indeed heartily grieved for the destruction of these men, and especially for that having heretofore received the doctrine and communion of the church, they are now departed from it. Which yet we ought not to think strange. For thus did Hymenæus and Philetus, and Judas before them both, who, having been a disciple of our Saviour, became afterwards a traitor and an apostate. Nor have we been left without warning of these things. For our Lord foretold, 'Beware, lest any man seduce you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am he, and the time is at hand, and shall deceive many: but go not after them.' And Paul, who learnt these things from our Saviour, writes thus: 'In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, that turn away men from the truth.' Since therefore our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has both himself forewarned, and by his apostle given us notice of these matters, we, who were ear-witnesses of these men's impiety, have justly condemned them, and declared them separate from the catholic church and faith. This, dear and honoured brethren, we have thought good to signify to your piety, that you may neither entertain any of them, if they shall have the confidence to come to you, nor give any credit to Eusebius, or any man else that shall write in their behalf. For it becomes us, as we are Christians, to turn away

from all those that either opine, or speak against Christ, as enemies to God, and corrupters of men's souls, and not so much 'as bid them God speed, lest we be partakers of their evil deeds,' as St. John has charged us. Salute the brethren that are with you. They that are with me salute you."

This epistle was subscribed by seventeen presbyters of Alexandria,^z and thirteen deacons, whereof one was Athanasius, and by sixteen presbyters, and as many deacons of the province of Maræotis. And, indeed, it was time for Alexander thus to bestir himself; for the flame had not only kindled in his own quarters, but began to spread itself into most other churches. All places were full of schisms and factions,^a of feuds and quarrels, and that not with open enemies, but amongst friends and neighbours; nothing but disputes and controversies heard in every company; and the common people, who were least capable to understand them, were made, not only spectators of the differences, but judges of the most abstruse and intricate doctrines of religion: nay, the very Gentiles themselves were furnished with matter of scorn and laughter, and the sublimest articles of the Christian faith made sport for the theatre.

IV. By this time Arius had left Alexandria,^b which the sentence of the late synod had now made too hot for him. He first retired into Palestine, to try what reception he could find amongst the bishops there, to whom he addressed himself with all the arts of courtship and insinuation, that might beget in them a good opinion of him and his cause, and oblige them to stand his friends. By many he was kindly entertained, but rejected by others: which Alexander no sooner understood, but he wrote to the Palestine bishops, to Eusebius of Cæsarea, Macarius of Jerusalem, Æsculapins of Gaza, Longinus of Ascalon, and several others, reproving those that had used him with so much kindness and civility; who all, by their several answers, returned him an account of what had been done; some protesting that they had not received him, others that they had done it through ignorance and surprise, not knowing the state of his case; others that they did not conceive him to be so bad as his adversaries represented him; and others that they had done it in order to

^z Vid. subscript. apud Gelas. Cyz. Hist. conc. Nic. l. ii. c. 3.

^a Euseb. de vit. Const. l. ii. c. 61. Theodor. l. i. c. 6.

^b Epiph. adv. Hæres. lxi. c. 4.

the reducing and reclaiming of him. However, the effect was, that men generally became more shy of his acquaintance and company. Whereupon finding his entertainment grow colder in these parts, he betook himself to his great patron at Nicomedia; with whom he found a hearty welcome, being received with all the demonstrations of affection and friendship. While he continued here, he again attempted to reconcile himself to his own bishop, by explaining his principles, and avoiding what he thought might be charged upon them, though he rendered them not one syllable better than he had done before, which he did in a letter directed to Alexander after this manner:^c “To the blessed pope Alexander, our bishop, the presbyters and deacons in our Lord, greeting. The faith which we have received from our ancestors, and which we learnt even from you, blessed father, is this: We acknowledge one God,” &c. The whole letter contains nothing else but an explication of their doctrines; wherein, though at first they seem to smooth over things with a plausible gloss, and terms contrived on purpose to disguise their meaning; yet, in fine, they plainly declared, that the Son is neither eternal nor co-eternal, nor co-essential with the Father, but that God is before the Son; and this they confidently tell him is no more than what they learnt from his own public sermons in the church. This letter was subscribed by Arius and his company, being the whole number of those who had been condemned in the late synod, excepting only the other Arius, who was either absent at this time upon some occasion, or his name, it may be, left out by transcribers, as supposing it the same with the former. A long time Arius remained at Nicomedia, though with what success to his affairs is not known; after which he seems to have returned back to Alexandria.

V. Thus things stood till the year 324, when Constantine, having vanquished Licinius, was come to Nicomedia, intending a farther journey into the East,^d into Syria, and Palestine, and thence into Egypt, when he was advertised of the dissensions at Alexandria, either by Eusebius bishop of Nicomedia, or by letters from Alexander, for that he wrote to the emperor about this affair, Epiphanius expressly tells us.^e The good emperor

^c Ext. ap. Athan. de Syn. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 16. et Epiph. adv. Hæres. lxi. c. 7.

^d Const. Epist. ap. Euseb. de vit. Const. l. ii. c. 72.

^e Adv. Hæres. lxi. c. 9.

was infinitely surprised and troubled at this unhappy news, and stopping his journey, wrote jointly to Alexander and Arius,^f the two heads of the dissenting parties: in which letter he tells them, that two things he had chiefly designed with himself, to reduce all persons to an unity and agreement in matters of religion, and to deliver the world from that yoke of tyranny that was upon it; and that having happily effected the latter by his late triumph and victory, he was resolutely bent upon the other, when the sad tidings of their woful differences overtook him: differences which he understood arose from nice and curious questions, and which ought not to be bandied in fruitless and subtle disputations; that therefore they should forbear such unprofitable problems, and mutually accord and join together; and when they were agreed in the main duties and principles of religion, should not for little things go on by such pertinacious contentions, to distract the minds of the people, and tear in pieces the peace of the church; passionately concluding, that they would return to mutual love and charity, and let the people enjoy their proper kindness and friendship, and laying aside all quarrelsome feuds and animosities, would receive and embrace each other; especially, that at least they would have some regard to his ease and quiet. “Restore me (says he) my calm and peaceable days, and my nights void of cares, that so hereafter I may enjoy comforts of pure light, and the pleasure of a quiet life may be my portion; otherwise I shall ravel out my days in tears and sorrow, and bid adieu for the future to repose and ease. For how shall I be able to support my mind, while my brethren, the people of God, are rent asunder by such pernicious and scandalous schisms and dissensions? By your concord, open my journey into the East, which you have blocked up by your feuds and quarrels; grant me thus much, that, as soon as is possible, I may see you and all other people rejoicing together, and that we may unanimously celebrate the due praises of God for the common liberty, peace, and concord.” This letter he sent by Hosius, bishop of Corduba in Spain, who had been an eminent confessor under the late persecution, one for whom Constantine had a great honour and reverence, and whom he now deputed as umpire to decide these differences. Indeed Baronius,

^f Ext. ap. Euseb. de vit. Const. l. ii. c. 64, etc. Vid. Socrat. l. i. c. 7.

true to the interest of his design,^g will needs have Hosius to have been sent as a legate from pope Sylvester upon this errand, that so the honour of this great affair might be derived upon the see of Rome. But for this there is no foundation appears in story, not one syllable of the pope's being concerned in it: all the account Eusebius gives of it is,^h that when the emperor heard the news, he was passionately concerned at it; and looking upon it as a thing nearly touching him, immediately despatched away one of the servants of God, that were then with him at court, one famous for the sobriety and excellency of his faith, and his constancy in religion in the late times, to compose the dissensions at Alexandria, furnishing him with necessary letters to the authors of them. Whereas Baronius suggests, what errand else could bring Hosius to court? As if an hundred occasions might not bring him thither, that are to us unknown. But if a reason must be assigned, why might not Constantine (who ever loved to have eminent bishops in his company) bring him along with him out of the West? Or, if he came upon public business, I should rather think it was upon the account of the contests of the Donatists in Africa, whose cause had been so often heard and canvassed in synods, both there, and in France, and at Rome, and that by the emperor's own order and direction, to whom those heretics frequently appealed. And this I am the rather inclined to believe, because Constantine in this very epistle tells us,ⁱ that upon his victory over Licinius, he designed to convene synods for the composing those African dissensions, which had so miserably disturbed and overrun the church; which he had effectually done, had not these new Alexandrian differences intervened. As for Hosius's subscribing first in the council of Nice, implying him thereby to have been the papal legate; admitting this to have been so, yet this was not till afterwards, and might be done time enough, when Sylvester, and the rest of the bishops, received the imperial summons for that synod. Nor could the pope derive his proxy upon a fitter person, a man of great name and note, already conversant in those parts, and that had been concerned and busied in those affairs. But the best of it is, there was no such thing, nor is there any ground in story for asserting it. And, accordingly, we find men of

^g Ad Ann. 318. num. 88, 89.

^h De vit. Const. l. ii. c. 63.

ⁱ Ibid. c. 66.

learning,^j and zealous enough for the interests of the church of Rome, who deny Hosius to have been the pope's legate in that council, and affirm him to have subscribed only in the name of the province for which he served, and that whatever precedency or authority he had in that synod, it was derived upon him by the fathers of the council, and that only upon account of his excellent learning, and eminent confessorship in the times of persecution.

VI. Hosius, thus furnished with the imperial commission, takes his journey for Alexandria, where being arrived, he delivered the emperor's letters, and it was determined, that the matter should be again examined by a public convention. Hereupon a synod of the bishops of those parts was assembled,^k which Baronius (who traded no farther than in Latin translations) calls a general council,^l and that for this reason, because it was held by the legate of the apostolic see; both certainly true alike: for neither did Hosius preside in this synod as the papal legate, nor is this synod in Athanasius styled a general council, things being only said to be managed *ὑπὸ κοινῆς συνόδου*, in a common assembly of the Egyptian bishops. What was particularly transacted in this synod, we nowhere find, more than that Colluthus was deposed, who having been presbyter of one of the parish-churches in Alexandria, had arrogantly assumed to himself the place and title of a bishop, and as such had consecrated many into holy orders, for which he was here censured and reduced to his former station, and the ordination of those who had been consecrated by him declared null and void. As for the Arian controversies, we may guess by the event what was the issue of this meeting, no good being done in it; neither the care and authority of the emperor, nor the presence and persuasions of Hosius, being able to prevail, the full deciding of the case being reserved to a more public and solemn determination.

^j Fr. Bivar. Comm. in Dextr. Chron. ad Ann. 324. p. 376. ubi alii citantur.

^k Vid. Athan. c. Arian. s. 74 et 75.

^l Ad Ann. 318. num. 88, 89. et Ann. 319. num. 23.

SECTION III.

THE ACTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL OF NICE.

A general council summoned at Nice from all parts of the Christian church. The different accounts of the numbers that met in that synod. Whence this arose. How many took part with Arius. The time and place of their meeting. A busy philosopher silenced and convinced by an illiterate confessor. The preliminary disputes with Arius. The vigour and briskness of Athanasius in those disputes. The manner of the emperor's entrance into the synod, and the effects of his speech to them. Their mutual heats and accusations quashed by Constantine. The Arian doctrine more solemnly debated by the fathers. The Arian formula, by whom brought into the synod. The subtle evasions of Arians in the niceties of the difference between them and the Catholics. The Nicene creed drawn up by Hosius, and approved by the council. By whom rejected. Arius and his associates banished by the emperor. Constantine's edict against them and their writings, and command that they should be styled Porphyrians. What determination the synod made in the case of Meletius, and the person ordained by him. Their decision of the Paschal controversy. The number of the canons made by them. What passed between Constantine and Acesius the Novatian bishop. No reason to question the truth of that story. The synodical epistle to the church of Alexandria, concerning the transactions of the council. The effects of some of Constantine's letters to the same purpose. The end and duration of the synod: the fathers magnificently treated by the emperor. Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nice recant their subscription to the decrees of the synod, and are banished by the emperor; their boldness and impiety. The true account of that matter.

AFTER Hosius had in vain attempted to make up the breach, he returned back to the court at Nicomedia, to give the emperor an account of his unsuccessful transaction at Alexandria. But Constantine desiring, if possible, to stop the gangrene from spreading farther, and finding that no private method would effect the cure, resolved, for the suppressing this and some other controversies then on foot, to call in the assistance of the whole Christian church. To which purpose he presently issued out his letters into all parts of the Christian world,^m commanding the bishops and clergy to meet together by a day appointed: who no sooner received the summons, but flocked out of all provinces, from Syria, Cilicia, Phœnicia, Arabia, Pontus, Galatia, Pamphylia, Cappadocia, Asia, Phrygia, Persia, Scythia, Egypt, Libya, Thracia, Macedonia, Epirus, Italy, and whence not? So that Eusebius compares this council to the great apostolical

^m Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 6, 7, etc.

assembly that met together upon the day of Pentecost, where there were Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the part of Libya about Cyrene, strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, men out of every nation under heaven. Only herein (as he observes) this had the advantage of the other, that in that the greatest part were laics, and they but proselytes; in this they were the guides and ministers of religion; men venerable for their age, and their confessions and constancy in the faith, for the gravity of their manners, the wisdom, learning, and reason of their arguments and discourses; who meeting together out of the remotest and most distant parts, made up a variegated garland (as he styles it) of the most beautiful and curious flowers which the Christian world ever beheld, either before or since. The place appointed for the assembly was Nice, the metropolis of Bithynia, (as Strabo calls it,ⁿ) situate upon the banks of the Ascanian lake, in the same province with Nicomedia, where the emperor then kept his court. It was a city large, and exactly four-square, and seated in a pleasant champaign, highly commended by an old geographer for the neatness,^o elegancy, evenness, and regularity of its buildings, so as scarce any other place could equal it. Hither came three hundred and eighteen bishops, besides an innumerable company of presbyters, deacons, and inferior orders. Indeed the number of the Nicene fathers is uncertainly delivered by the ancients. Eusebius makes them more than two hundred and fifty.^p Eustathius, bishop of Antioch,^q two hundred and seventy, (but withal tells us, that by reason of the greatness of the number he could give no certain account, nor was he very exact and curious about this matter.) Athanasius, three hundred,^r more or less; Sozomen about three hundred and twenty.^s A manuscript collection of synodical acts, which Mr. Selden conjectures to have been written about the time of the council of Chalcedon,^t makes the bishops to have been two hundred and thirty-two; the priests, deacons, and monks, eighty-six: in all, three hundred and

ⁿ Lib. xii. p. 565.

^o Vet. Orb. descript. Gr. Lat. à Gothofred. edit. p. 28.

^p De vit. Const. l. iii. c. 8.

^q Ap. Theodor. l. i. c. 8.

^r Ep. ad Monachos. s. 66, et 67.

^s Lib. i. c. 17.

^t Comment. in Eutyech. p. 72.

eighteen. With him concurs a modern Greek historian, who adds,^u that the reason why just so many met, was because there were just so many years expired from the birth of Christ to the convening of that synod, which he makes to have been called anno 318. On the other hand, Eutychius the Arabic historian, and Ismael Ibn Ali a Mahometan historian, mentioned by Mr. Selden, enlarge the number to two thousand and forty-eight.^w Out of which they tell us, the emperor selected three hundred and eighteen. Though whence this variety of reports should arise, whether from the great numbers of inferior clergy that came thither, but had no votes in the council, or from the dissenting parties in the synod, not taken into account, is hard to say. The first is most probable, especially since Eusebius tells us, that the number of presbyters, deacons, *acolythi*, and others that attended the bishops thither, was so great, that they could not well be reckoned up. Nicetas Choniates gives this reason,^x why no more bishops met in so venerable an assembly, because age and sickness detained many at home, and that bishoprics were then but thin sowed, every little city not being then advanced into an episcopal see, as it was afterwards; some whole countries having no more than one bishop to preside over them. The number that has gained the general suffrage in all ages of the church, is that there were three hundred and eighteen bishops, and with this Athanasius himself elsewhere concurs.^y And to make it the more sacred and venerable, Liberius, with his council of Western bishops,^z has found out a mystery in it, it being exactly the same number wherewith the patriarch Abraham went out and overcame the vast army of the infidels. Of this number there were that espoused the cause of Arius in the council, nine (say some,^a) thirteen (say others,^b) fifteen,^c or seventeen (as others,^d) Philostorgius reckons up twenty-two,^e whose names he sets down, together with the provinces from whence they came. They were all together, with their attendants and followers, transported thither by public conveyances at

^u Dorothe. Monemb. *Σύνοψ. διαφ. ιστορ.* p. σλη'.

^w Loc. supra citat.

^x Thes. Orth. Fid. l. v. c. 5.

^y Epist. ad Afric. episc. s. 2.

^z Epist. ad episc. Macedon. ap. Socrat. l. iv. c. 12.

^a Theod. Mops. apud Nicet. Thes. Orth. fid. l. v. c. 7.

^b Theodor. ap eundem.

^c Sozom. ibid.

^d Act. Synod. ibid. Rufin. l. i. c. 5.

^e Hist. Eccl. l. i. ap. Nicet. Thes. Orth. fid. l. v. c. 7.

the emperor's charge, as they were maintained at his cost during their being there.

II. This venerable synod began upon the twentieth day of May, or, as others more probably, on the nineteenth of June, Ann. Chr. 325. They met (as the ecclesiastic historians generally affirm) in the great hall of the palace; though a learned man thinks it highly improbable,^f that such sublime and sacred matters should be debated any where but in the church; and that it was only on the final and conclusive day that they assembled in the palace. But wherever it was, it was a place which this great transaction recommended to the respect and reverence of posterity, some part of it yet standing in the last age, and which Busbequius, the emperor's ambassador, supposes to be the place he lodged in in his Amasian journey to the grand seignior's court.^g The bishops, before they formally met in a solemn council, spent some days in preliminary discourses and disputations,^h wherein they were first attacked by certain philosophers, men versed in subtleties and the arts of reasoning, whom either curiosity had drawn hither, or, as some suspect, Arius had brought along with him to plead his cause, and to retard and entangle the proceedings of the synod. One of which, priding himself in the neatness and elegance of his discourses, reflected with scorn upon the fathers of the council: a piece of insolence so intolerable, that an ancient confessor then in the company, a man plain, and unskilled in the tricks and methods of disputing, not being able to bear it, offered himself to undertake him. For which he was laughed at by some, while others, more modest and serious, feared what would be the success of his entering the lists with so able and famed a disputant. The good man however went on with his resolution, and bluntly accosted his adversary in this manner. "In the name of Jesus Christ, philosopher, give ear. There is one God, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible, who created all these things by the power of his Word, and ratifies them by the sanctity of his Holy Spirit. This Word, which we call the Son of God, pitying the apostacy and brutish state of mankind, condescended to be born of a woman, to dwell amongst

^f H. Val. Annot. in Eus. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 10.

^g De Legat. Turc. Epist. i. p. 56. ed. 1605.

^h Socrat. l. i. c. 8. Sozom. l. i. c. 17. Rufin. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 3.

men, and to die for them, who shall come again to sit as judge upon whatever we do in this life. These things we plainly believe. Strive not therefore to no purpose, to endeavour the confutation of what we entertain by faith, or to find out how these things may, or may not be; but answer me, if thou dost believe." The philosopher, astonished and thunder-struck with the zeal and plainness of the old man's discourse, answered that he did believe; and thanking that conqueror that had overcome him, yielded up himself to his sentiments and opinions, persuading his companions to do the like, solemnly affirming, that it was by an unspeakable power, and not without immediate direction from heaven, that he was thus brought over to be a Christian. This passage, for substance the same both in Rufinus, Socrates, and Sozomen, Gelasius Cyzicenus has improved into many elaborate stories, having given us at large the particular disputations of these philosophers, with the replies of the several fathers of the synod about the Arian doctrines; which being in all likelihood no better than the issue of his own brain, we here omit.

III. But to proceed, that which they were most intent upon, was the examination of those opinions, that had created so much noise and bustle in the church. For which purpose they frequently called for Arius before them,¹ debated his propositions, considered what might be said on either side, weighed every thing with infinite care and deliberation, that nothing might be rashly determined in so weighty and important an affair. This freedom of debate soon multiplied infinite questions, and produced various and different counsels and persuasions about the matter. Some advised that no innovations should be made in matters of faith, but that it should be still entertained with the same naked simplicity, wherewith from the beginning it had been delivered to the church; men of simple and honest minds, not thinking it fit that articles concerning God should be made the subject of subtle and over-curious disputes. Others contending that times and circumstances altered the decency of things, and that we ought not implicitly to follow the opinions of the ancients, without due trial and examination. These disputations were managed with great heat and briskness, both by them of the episcopal, and by others of inferior orders; amongst which, in the former capacity, none appeared with more warmth and zeal

¹ Rufin. ubi supr. Sozom. loc. citat. et c. 18.

than Alexander, as being most immediately concerned in the controversy, as amongst the latter none behaved himself with more smartness and accuracy than Athanasius, at that time deacon of the church of Alexandria, whom Alexander had brought along with him to the synod; where, with all boldness and vehemency, he assaulted and opposed the Arian principles, for which (as the Egyptian bishops, in their synodical epistle, tell us^k) that party never forgave him, transferring their pique against Alexander upon him; a quarrel which they never ceased to prosecute to his dying day.

IV. Hitherto the fathers had been exercised only with private and preparatory disquisitions, like light skirmishes to the main battle. But now they were to act more solemnly, in a synodical way, to bring the thing to a final issue; at which assembly, probably, none were present of the inferior clergy, at least none gave their votes. The bishops being met in the palace,^l where all things were made ready to receive them, the emperor came attended not with his usual guards, but persons eminent for their faith and piety. He entered the council with all imaginable pomp and state, clothed with the richest and most splendid robes, but with a mind humble and pious in the midst of all his greatness. He passed through the ranks on each side to the upper end of the hall, where he placed himself in the midst, and having received an intimation from the bishops that all things were ready, sat down in the chair that was placed for him; after which the fathers took their places, and some of them having awhile entertained him with speeches in the name of the synod, silence was made, and in the Latin tongue (which by the interpreter was soon rendered into Greek) he discoursed to them to this effect. "That there was nothing which he had more passionately desired, than to behold this venerable assembly, for which, being now met, he returned hearty thanks to the supreme Governor of the world; that he desired no envious man might hereafter interrupt their prosperity, and that when the divine power of our Saviour had delivered them from the oppositions of impious and atheistical tyrants, the mischievous enemy of mankind might not be suffered to shift the scene, and attempt it by another way: that he looked upon the intestine divisions

^k Ap. Athan. c. Arian. c. 6. vid. Socrat. l. i. c. 8.

^l Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 10.

of the church of God, as the most pernicious and dangerous commotions, nothing creating so great a trouble to his mind: that when God had blessed him with such happy success against his enemies, he had well hoped he had had nothing to do, but to celebrate the divine goodness, and rejoice in the common safety; but being unexpectedly arrested with the unwelcome news of their dissensions, he thought himself obliged immediately to take care about it, and had for that end so suddenly called them together, as the most proper and effectual remedy in this matter, and should then think he had done it to good purpose, when he should see them join hearts and hands together, and promote the public peace and concord, which, as persons consecrated to God, they were above all others bound to procure and further; that therefore, as ministers of God, as faithful servants of the common Lord and Saviour, they should endeavour, that all occasions of difference being thrown out of the way, and the noise of contention being dissolved, they might preserve things in the bond of peace. By which means (said he) you will at once do what is highly acceptable to the great God, and infinitely gratify me, your fellow-servant." And certainly it was not without reason, that this pious prince so pathetically pressed them to peace and unity. For amongst other artifices to obstruct the proceedings of the council, this was not the least, to exasperate the minds of the bishops against each other, by which means they had charged and impeached one another,^m and had presented libels of accusation to the emperor: which he receiving at their hands, had tied together in a bundle, and set his own seal upon them. And having afterwards made peace amongst them, produced the bundle, and gravely chiding them for their mutual recriminations, told them, "That these things were reserved for the decisions of the great day, and were not so proper for the cognizance of human judicatures, both plaintiff and defendant being persons in holy offices, who ought to do nothing that may make them liable to those tribunals: that setting before them the divine clemency and indulgence, they should forbear and forgive one another; and laying aside their quarrels, agree, and mind the things that concerned the faith, the end for which they were there met together." And with that he threw the papers into the fire, seriously protesting, that

^m Sozom. l. i. c. 17. Theodor. l. i. c. 11.

he had not read one word of them ; that it was not fit the faults of priests should be published to the scandal of the people, who might thence derive a warrant to themselves to sin with more freedom and boldness ; that for his own part, if he should chance to spy a bishop overtaken in a wanton and immodest action, he would cover him with his own imperial cloak, rather than it should be exposed to the offence and scandal of spectators. But to proceed.

V. No sooner had the emperor given the synod leave to debate their matters, but they presently fell upon the Arian controversies. And first they examined the Acts of the synod at Alexandria,ⁿ that so they might proceed with all possible care and caution, and the parties criminal know that they had not been sentenced without just cause. Next they canvassed the doctrines of Arius, whose propositions were extracted and read out of his own writings ; at the hearing whereof, the holy fathers stopped their ears, declaring them heretical,^o and alien from the faith of the church. The case at first was argued with heat on both sides, with great contention and opposition, there being seventeen of the bishops that appeared in favour of the Arian cause, and some few more, it may be, that did not openly declare themselves. In these contests the good emperor sat as a public moderator,^p hearing the debates with an unwearied patience, and weighing the arguments with an intent and judicious mind : to what appeared just and reasonable, he gave a ready assent ; where any were refractory and pertinacious, he sought to reclaim them by mild and gentle means ; some he conquered by reason and argument ; others he prevailed with by importunity and persuasion ; endeavouring to reduce all to love and peace. The Arians, by Eusebius of Nicomedia, brought a writing into the synod, containing an account of their faith ; which Eustathius^q of Antioch, one of the council, calls vile and impious, and a most evident argument of blasphemy ; and tells us, it was no sooner read, but it was infinitely resented, and torn in pieces before them all. I know Monsieur Valois^r will have this libel brought in not by the Nicomedian, but Cæsarean Eusebius ; and that it

ⁿ Jul. Pap. Ep. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 22.

^o Athan, Ep. ad episc. Ægypt. et Lib. s. 13.

^p Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 13.

^q Ap. Theodor. l. i. c. 8.

^r Annot. ad Socrat. l. i. c. 7, 8.

was that formula or confession of faith, which Eusebius brought into the synod, and of which himself has given us a particular account in his letter to the people of Cæsarea.⁵ But this certainly without any reason, there being nothing in that confession that deserves so bad a character; nothing that savours either of heresy or blasphemy; and which the author tells us was well approved, and both with the emperor and the rest found a candid and kind reception. Most probable therefore it is, that the Nicomedian confession being rejected by the synod, another was presented by Eusebius of Cæsarea, as a more sound and safe expedient.

VI. But though this of Eusebius was consonant and agreeable enough to the doctrine of the church, yet was it not thought sufficiently punctual and expressive in the minutiae and criticisms of the controversy. For the Arians represented their propositions in such general terms, and were so subtle and deceitful in their explications,⁶ that the fathers thought they could never particularly enough provide against them. When the orthodox asserted Christ to be God, the Arians allowed it, but then meant it in no other sense, than as angels and holy men are styled gods, and the sons of God, in scripture: when they affirmed him to be true God, the others assented, that he was truly made so by God: if the Catholics maintained that the Son was naturally of God, the Arians would grant it; for even we (say they) are of God, "there being one God, of whom are all things." Did the one hold, that the Son was the Power, Wisdom, and Image of the Father; the other never scrupled to admit it, for that we also are said to be "the image and glory of God," and even the meanest creatures are sometimes called the great power of God. Such being the crafty and fraudulent shifting of their adversaries, the fathers found themselves obliged to collect together the places of scripture which represent the divinity of the Son of God, which they more particularly declared to be meant of his being of the same substance with the Father; that creatures were said to be of God, because not existing of themselves, they had their rise and beginning from him; but the Son only was properly of the substance of the Father; this being the peculiar pro-

⁵ Ap. Theodor. l. i. c. 12.

⁶ Athan. Epist. ad Afric. episc. s. 5. De decret. Synod. Nic. s. 20, 32. vid. Theodor. l. i. c. 8.

priety of the only-begotten, and the true Word of the Father. All which they summed up into this one word *ὁμοούσιος*, implying him to be con-substantial, or co-essential with the Father.

VII. Matters having proceeded thus far, the result of their determination was ordered to be comprised in a standing creed or confession of faith, which was accordingly drawn up by Hosius,^x bishop of Corduba, by him brought into the synod, and highly approved both by them and the emperor, and was in this form.

“ We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible: and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father; God of God, and Light of Light, very God of God; begotten, not made, being con-substantial, or, of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, both in heaven and earth: who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate, and was made man: He suffered, and rose again the third day; ascended into heaven, and shall come again to judge the quick and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost. But for those that say, there was a time when he was not, and, that he was not before he was made; or, that he was made out of things that were not, or, that he is of any other substance or essence, or that he is obnoxious to change or alteration; all such the holy catholic and apostolic church does anathematize and reject.”

This confession was almost universally entertained; Constantine declaring his hearty approbation of it,^y and that he looked upon this unity in the council, as immediately given from above; and that whoever refused to comply with the decrees thus established, should be banished, as a person endeavouring to reverse the judgment of God himself. Having thus condemned Arius's doctrine, they proceeded next to censure his person, deposing and excommunicating him and his followers,^z and forbidding him to enter into Alexandria, where he had so plentifully sowed his tares. To these decrees the Arian party at first stood off and would not consent, but knowing how deeply they were

^x Athan. Epist. ad Monachos. s. 43.

^y Sozom. l. i. c. 20.

^z Sozom. *ibid.* c. 21.

like to fall under the emperor's displeasure, and being advised to it (says Philostorgius^a) by their great patroness Constantina, the emperor's sister, they at last subscribed, though not to the deposing of Arius, yet to the confession of faith. Though even this they did (as he adds,^b and we may safely credit their own historian) ἐν δόλῳ by arts of treachery and deceit, reserving to themselves their own sense, and subscribing not ὁμοούσιος, but ὁμοιούσιος, not that the Son is of the *same*, but only of a *like essence* with the Father. Two only of the whole number stood out, Secundus bishop of Ptolemais, and Theonas of Marmarica, who chose rather to undergo the same fate with Arius, than to own and acquiesce in the synodical determination. The former of which, not long after, came to Eusebius of Nicomedia, and bluntly told him: "Eusebius, thou hast subscribed merely to prevent banishment, but I trust in God that thou wilt be banished within a twelvemonth;" which accordingly came to pass.

VIII. The council having done their part, the emperor was not long wanting in his. For he commanded Arius and his condemned associates to be banished,^c who were accordingly transmitted into Illyricum, the place appointed for their exile. And by a subsequent edict, directed indefinitely both to clergy and people, ordered his writings to be burnt, and a title of ignominy to be fixed upon the party. The copy of the letter, being but short,^d we here insert.

"Constantine the Great, the August, the Conqueror, to the bishops and people.

"Since Arius has taken upon him to imitate impious and bad men, it is but just he should undergo the same punishment with them. As therefore Porphyry, the enemy of true religion, for the pernicious volumes he wrote against Christianity met with a reward due to so great a villany, to become infamous to all posterity, to be loaded with reproaches and execrations, and to have his impious books quite banished out of the world; so it now seems good to us, that Arius and his adherents be called PORPHYRIANS, that they may bear his title whose manners they imitate and resemble. Farther, if any book written by Arius be found, we

^a Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 8.

^b Loc. cit. et ap. Nicet. Thes. Orth. Fid. l. v. c. 8.

^c Sozom. l. i. c. 21.

^d Ext. ap. Soerat. l. i. c. 9. Vid. Sozom. loc. cit.

command it to be burnt, that so not only his vile doctrines may be utterly extirpated, but that not the least monument of him may remain. Declaring also, that if any man shall be found to conceal any such book of Arius, and not presently offer it to be burnt, as soon as ever he shall be apprehended, he shall be put to death. God have you in his keeping.”

Several letters of this nature Constantine wrote up and down against Arius and his followers ;^e and amongst the rest, that cited by Epiphanius, but extant entire in Gelasius Cyzicenus,^f wherein he expostulates the case with him in the most vehement manner,^g and treats the man with all imaginable sharpness and severity.

IX. Together with that of Arius, the synod took under consideration the case of Meletius,^h the Egyptian bishop, who had given so much disturbance to Peter and his successors in that see ; with him they dealt by more easy and gentle measures, his fault being not heresy, but a schism only. Him they confine to his own city, allow him the title of a bishop, but without any episcopal power or jurisdiction either in city or country. The persons that had been ordained by him, being first confirmed by Alexander, their proper metropolitan, were to be admitted to communion, and to the exercise of their several ministries ; but, according to the capacities of their station, were to take place after all other clergymen, in all churches and parishes where they came ; and as others died out of any place, they in their order might succeed, being regularly chosen by the people, and the election ratified by the bishop of Alexandria : but that they themselves should have no hand in the election, or power to choose whom they would. As for Meletius himself, knowing his inveterate contumacy, and his rash heady temper, they quite divested him of all power, lest he should excite the same troubles and factions which he had formerly raised in the church of God.

X. The next thing that came under debate (for being thus far engaged, we shall give a brief account of the whole transactions of the synod) was the Paschal controversy, concerning the time of the celebration of Easter, wherein the Christian world was so much divided ; the Asiatics and Eastern churches ob-

^e Sozom. l. i. c. 21.

^f Hæres. l. ix. c. 9.

^g Hist. Conc. Nic. l. iii. c. 1.

^h Epist. Synod. Nicen. ap. Socrat. l. i. c. 9. Vid. Sozom. l. i. c. 24.

serving it after the Jewish custom, on the fourteenth day after the *phasis*, or appearance of the moon, the rest on the next Lord's day after the Jewish Passover: a question controverted from the very infancy of the church, and managed even by good men with great bitterness and animosity, and about this time revived as hot as ever. The suppressing whereof was one of the emperor's prime inducements in calling this oecumenical assembly,ⁱ where it was first concluded in the general, that it was a thing highly fit and reasonable, that this great festival should in all places be solemnized upon one and the same day: next, that it was as indecent and uncomely, that this solemnity, wherein we commemorate our Saviour's rising from the dead, should depend upon the custom of the Jews, who, with so execrable a villany, had imbrued their hands in his innocent blood: wherefore it was universally agreed to follow the usage of those churches whose custom it had been, from all antiquity, to observe it on the Lord's day next ensuing the Jewish festival. And thus was this storm on a sudden calmed, which the endeavours of preceding ages were never able to allay. The last thing they took in hand, was to draw up some rules for ecclesiastic discipline,^k and the government of the church, which they digested into twenty canons, all extant entire at this day: which they who have improved into eighty-four, might by the same authority have added as many more. For though neither Socrates nor Sozomen say any thing of the particular number, yet Theodoret,^l Gelasius,^m and many others, expressly limit it to twenty. Nor have any more been owned, or so much as heard of, (an Arabic writer or two, of no credit, excepted,) till of late in the Christian church.

XI. Amongst others whom the emperor had summoned to the synod, was Acesius,ⁿ bishop of the Novatian party, who, upon the account of the severity of their principles, kept separate assemblies, and did not communicate with other churches; the pious prince, whose heart was set upon abolishing all dissensions amongst Christians, hoping to reconcile and bring them in. The

ⁱ Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 5, 14, 18, 19.

^k Socrat. l. i. c. 13. Sozom. l. i. c. 23. Epiph. Hæres. lxi. c. 11.

^l Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 8.

^m Hist. Conc. Nic. l. ii. c. 30.

ⁿ Socrat. l. i. c. 10. Sozom. l. i. c. 22.

creed being drawn up, and ratified by common subscriptions, the emperor demanded of Acesius, whether he also would subscribe it, and stand to the determination about the Paschal festival. Acesius replied, that the council had defined nothing new in this matter, and that he had ever received the faith as such, and the time of the solemnity of Easter, as what had been so delivered from the beginning, even from the very times of the apostles. But why then (said Constantine) do you separate from the communion of the church? Hereupon the bishop began to open his case, and acquaint him with the state of things under the Decian persecution, and what had happened between Novatian and Cornelius bishop of Rome, and that it was the severe principle of their party, that those who after baptism fell into any such crime, which the scripture calls "the sin unto death," were not to be admitted to the holy communion; they were indeed to be invited and exhorted to repentance, but might not expect remission or absolution from the priests, but must look for it at the hands of God, who alone has power and right to forgive sin. The emperor paused a little, and considering the unmerciful strictness of this rule, replied, "If so, then, Acesius, set up your ladder, and go to heaven by yourself." This story is questioned by the late publisher of the Ecclesiastical Historians;^o but Socrates, that reports it, assures us he received it from Auxanon,^p a Novatian presbyter, who attended Acesius to that council, and both saw and heard what passed there. And though we should be so unreasonably disingenuous as to suppose Auxanon made the relation itself, yet can it not be imagined, what should tempt him to feign a story that made so little for the credit of his own party.

XII. Nothing now remained, but that, as the custom was in such cases, they should give some public notice of what had been transacted in the synod, especially to the churches whom it more immediately concerned. To which end they presently despatched away the following letter to the church of Alexandria,^q and to the bishops of those parts, giving them a succinct account of what had passed in the council.

^o Vales. Annot. ad Socr. p. 9.

^p Vid. Socrat. l. i. c. 10, 13.

^q Ext. ap. Socrat. l. i. c. 9. Theodor. l. i. c. 8.

“ To the holy and great church, by the grace of God settled at Alexandria, and to the dear brethren through Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, the bishops assembled at Nice, and there constituting a great and holy synod, in our Lord greeting.

“ Since by the favour of God, and the most religious emperor Constantine, who has convened us out of divers cities and provinces, a holy and great council is celebrated at Nice; we have thought it necessary, that letters should be sent to you from the whole sacred synod, that you may understand both what has been propounded and debated, and what has been agreed upon and decreed. First, then, the impious cause of Arius and his associates was discussed in the presence of the most religious emperor, and by universal suffrage his ungodly principles were condemned; yea, and the very blasphemous words and phrases that he makes use of to express them, when he affirms, ‘ that the Son of God sprang out of nothing, and that there was a time when he was not, and that, according to the freedom of his will, he is capable of vice and virtue,’ not scrupling to call him a creature, and the workmanship of God: all which the holy synod, being no longer able to bear such impiety and madness, nor to hear such blasphemous expressions, has anathematized and condemned. And, indeed, what has been determined concerning him, you have either heard already, or will hear shortly; that we may not seem to insult over a man, who has received such a recompense as his crimes deserved. Nay, so venomous and malignant was his impiety, as to draw Theonas bishop of Marmarica, and Secundus of Ptolemais, along with him into the same ruin. The same sentence that passed upon him, being passed also against them. But forasmuch as when the grace of God had delivered them from the blasphemy and impiety of this wretched opinion, and from those persons who feared not to raise dissensions and divisions amongst a people formerly living in peace and unity, the boldness and contumacy of Meletius, and those that had been ordained by him, did still continue; we give you to understand, dear brethren, what the synod has determined in this matter. It seemed good, then, (the council dealing more tenderly with him, for, in strict justice, he deserved no pity,) that Meletius should reside in his own city, but have no power either of electing, or laying on of hands; nor should,

upon that account, appear in any town or city, and should only retain the venerable title of bishop. And as for those that have been ordained by him, being confirmed by a more holy and warrantable ordination, they are to be admitted to communion, with this condition, that they retain their dignity and their office, but be ever placed after all those whom our much honoured colleague Alexander has at any time before ordained, in what church or diocese soever they be. And as to these persons, they shall have no power to choose whom they please, or to propound any one's name in order to it, or, indeed, to do any thing at all without the consent of the bishops of the catholic church that are under Alexander's jurisdiction. But where any, by the grace of God, and the assistance of your prayers, shall be found not to have been guilty of any schism, but to have continued unblameable in the catholic and apostolic church, let them have power of electing and propounding the names of such persons as are fit to be admitted into the clergy, and of doing all other things according to the rules and canons of the church. And if any of them that are in the church chance to die, let them who were lately taken in be advanced into the place and dignity of the person deceased, always provided, that they appear worthy, and that the people choose; but, withal, that the bishop of Alexandria consent to, and ratify the election. And the same is to be granted to all others. As for Meletius himself, it has pleased the synod not to deal altogether so favourably with him; that considering his former contumacy, and the rash and precipitate humour of the man, he should be entrusted with no power or authority, whereby he may again be capable to raise the same stirs and tumults that he did before. These are the things that peculiarly concern Egypt, and the most holy church of Alexandria. If there be any thing else decreed or desired, while our lord and reverend colleague and brother Alexander is present with us, he himself at his return shall acquaint you with it more particularly, he being chief author and actor of what is transacted here. We give you likewise to understand, of the agreement about the most holy feast of Easter, that by the assistance of your prayers, this affair is happily ended; and that all the brethren in the East, who beforetime celebrated it after the Jewish custom, will henceforth unanimously celebrate it agreeably to the usage of the Roman church, and to us, and to

all that from all antiquity have kept it as we do. Rejoice, therefore, for this happy settlement of affairs, and both for the common peace and agreement, and for that all heresy is cut off: receive our colleague, and your bishop, Alexander, with greater demonstrations of honour, respect, and love, who has both by his presence added great contentment and satisfaction to us, and even at this age has sustained infinite and indefatigable pains, that peace and unity might be restored to you. Pray for us all, that those things that have been well constituted may remain firm and entire, through the blessing of Almighty God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, being ordained, as we verily believe, according to the good pleasure of God the Father in the Holy Spirit. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

This synodical epistle was backed with another from the emperor,^r wherein he tells them, that he looked upon it as one of the greatest blessings of the divine providence, that truth had so gloriously triumphed over error; that schisms and dissensions were banished; that the evil doctrines which Arius, (to whom he gives no better a character, than τοῦ διαβόλου ἀναιδῆς τις ὑπηρέτης, “the shameless minister of the devil,”) had scattered up and down the world, having been first examined with all possible care and accuracy, had been rejected, and the contrary truth established by the fathers of the synod; whose sentence herein was to be embraced as the judgment of God, as proceeding from persons enlightened and directed by the Holy Ghost, which every one should shew himself ready to entertain, and willing to return into the way of truth. Besides this, he wrote also to the churches in general,^s to let them know, what pains he had taken for the composure of the Paschal controversy, and how unanimously the council had decided it, and how infinitely reasonable it was, that it should be kept at the same time in the whole catholic church; that therefore he desired they would acquiesce in the decree, and receive it as a blessing from heaven, καὶ θεῖαν ὡς ἀληθῶς ἐντολήν, and as truly a divine command; seeing what was determined by the bishops in holy synods, was to be referred to the will of God.

XIII. All things thus successfully accomplished, the emperor

^r Ext. ap. Socrat. l. i. c. 9.

^s Ext. ap. Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 17. Socrat. ubi sup. Theodor. l. i. c. 10.

invited the bishops †(it being then the great solemnity of his *vicennalia*) to a public dinner, where all the guards and officers stood ready to receive them. The more eminent he entertained at his own table, the rest in apartments prepared for them. And where he espied any that had lost their right eyes for their constant adherence to the faith in the times of persecution, he kissed the wounds, doing all imaginable reverence to the persons, and expecting to receive their benediction. After dinner, he loaded them with gifts and presents answerable to their merits, and the dignity of their places, and suitable to the magnificence of so great a prince: which done, he took his leave of them, again pressing them to maintain an uniformity in the faith, and peace amongst themselves; withal requesting, that every day they would earnestly solicit heaven for him, his children, and the prosperity of his empire. After which, they mutually took leave of one another, each one preparing for his journey home. Thus ended this great and first general council, after it had sitten somewhat more than two months, beginning June the 19th, and breaking up about the latter end of August. So prodigiously extravagant are the accounts of those who extend it, not only to more months, but years. Some make it to last three years and six months;^u Nicephorus,^v three years, and somewhat better; Gelasius,^w from the sixteenth to the twentieth year of Constantine's reign; Photius^x and the author of the *Synodicon*^y make it holden both under the pontificates of pope Silvester and Julius, which, accounting from the usual computation of its being called anno 325, can extend it to no less than thirteen years. Whenas it is most evident, that it was holden under the consulship of Paulinus and Julian, and ended when Constantine celebrated his *vicennalia*, or the twentieth year of his reign; which commencing Ann. Chr. 306, fell in just about this time.

XIV. It was but three months after the dissolution of the synod,^z when Eusebius bishop of Nicomedia, and Theognis of Nice, notwithstanding their politic dissimulation, were sent the same way with Arius, being banished by the emperor's command. What the particular cause was, is variously reported. Philostor-

† Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 15. Sozom. l. i. c. 25. Theodor. l. i. c. 11.

^u Act. Metroph. et Alex. ap. Phot. cclvi. ^v Lib. viii. c. 26. ^w Lib. ii. c. 35.

^x Epist. ad Mich. Bulg. p. 3.

^y Synod. p. 16.

^z Philost. l. i. c. 9. Sozom. l. i. c. 21.

gius,^a who studies all ways to secure their credit, tells us, that repenting of what they had done, their subscribing to the Nicene decrees, they came to the emperor, and told him, "We have done ill, sir, in that, for fear of you, we have subscribed an impious confession." Whereat the good emperor was moved with a just passion and indignation. Others relate, that having corrupted the imperial registrar,^b who kept the Acts of the Nicene council, they razed out their subscriptions, and then began openly to assert, that it was false doctrine, to teach that the Son was co-essential with the Father. For which Eusebius being complained of to the emperor, carried himself before him with an excessive confidence, and shewing him his garment, asked him, whether if he should see that garment rent in two, he should ever affirm, each part to be the same substance? A piece of impudence and impiety which the emperor resented with infinite trouble, and the more to see those controversies again revived, which he had well hoped, by the care of the late council, had been wholly suppressed and stifled. Though these reports be no ways unsuitable to the temper and humour of the men, yet is it safest to rely upon the account which the emperor himself gives of it in his letter to the people of Nicomedia,^c written immediately upon the sentence of their banishment; wherein, after he had asserted the catholic doctrine, and reflected upon the perniciousness of the Arian principles, he comes more particularly to Eusebius their bishop, whom he charges with holding correspondence with the tyrant Licinius, and having been a cause of the late persecution, with treasons and conspiracies against his own person, but especially with poisoning them with heretical doctrine, for which he had now provided them a remedy, by sending them a faithful and orthodox bishop, who would not fail to set them in the right way, did they but cheerfully comply with him. That as for Eusebius, he had between fear and shame renounced those impious opinions in the late council of Nice, sending frequent messages to himself to intercede for him, and to pray that he might not be exposed to shame, and thrust from the honour of his place, by which means he had been circumvented and imposed upon. And yet, after all, he and

^a Ap. Nicet. Thes. Orth. Fid. l. v. c. 8.

^b Sozom. l. ii. c. 21.

^c Ext. fragm. ap. Theodor. l. i. c. 20. integra vero ap. Gelas. Cyzic. l. iii. c. 2. Vid. Nicet. Thes. Orth. Fid. l. v. c. 8.

Theognis had lately discovered and betrayed themselves. For that certain factious heretics of Alexandria, whom he had sent for from thence, as the common *boutefeu*s and incendiaries of the place, and whom the mercy of the synod had spared, in hopes of their repentance, being there, these men had not only encouraged and entertained, and taken them home to them, but communicated with them in all their wicked and ungodly practices. For which cause he had ordered them to be banished into a remote country; and if any should presume to speak in commendation, or make mention of those pests and plagues, his boldness should quickly find its just punishment and correction. Accordingly, they were immediately banished into France, and their sees supplied by two worthy persons, Amphion at Nicomedia, and Chrestus at Nice.

SECTION IV.

THE ACTS OF ATHANASIUS, FROM THE NICENE COUNCIL TILL THE SYNOD AT TYRE.

A more close approach to the Athanasian story. The death of Alexander, and election of Athanasius to that see. The regularity of his ordination justified against the calumnies of the Arians. His age at that time. The story of his childish personating the bishop suspected. The Arians confederate with the Meletians against him. Meletius's violation of the Nicene decrees. Arius's release from banishment. The return of Eusebius and Theognis, and the declaration of their assent to the faith of Nice. The Arian stories of Constantine's favour to their party, and displeasure against the Catholics. Athanasius's visitation of his diocese, and discovery of Ischyras. His intimacy with St. Anthony. Great attempts made for Arius's reconciliation. Complaints made at court against Athanasius. His defence, and honourable dismissal. The crimes falsely charged upon Eustathius bishop of Antioch, and his banishment. The charge revived against Athanasius, who gives satisfaction to the emperor in those matters. A synod indited at Cæsarea, to inquire into the cause of Athanasius. He refuses to appear, and is misrepresented for his refusal.

HITHERTO we have followed the course of the main story, we shall now more particularly bring it down to Athanasius's door, and present him upon the public stage of action; to be bishop of Alexandria being (as Nazianzen speaks in this very case^d) in effect to be bishop of the whole world; and such especially he

^d Orat. xxi. in Athan. p. 377.

was, whose acts and sufferings make up almost the entire story of that age, in which capacity he will now fall under our pen. Alexander being returned from the council of Nice, and having received into his charge the churches, which Meletius, who had unjustly usurped them, readily delivered up to him, died not long after. As if God had but spared him, to let him taste the fruit of his eminent labours, and congratulate his church's settlement in tranquillity and peace, and had only brought him home, that his bones might be entombed with honour amongst his own people. He died five months after the rising of the synod; and before his death is said to have designed Athanasius for his successor. For so Apollinaris the Syrian (whose father was born and bred at Alexandria) informs us,^e that Alexander, lying upon his death-bed, frequently called for Athanasius, who was then absent, and suspecting him to have withdrawn himself to avoid the great charge that he meant to devolve upon him, he cried out, "Athanasius, thou thinkest thou hast escaped, but thou shalt not escape." Epiphanius, who strangely confounds times and persons, tells us,^f that Alexander dying, and Athanasius, to whom he had bequeathed that see, being then from home, sent upon a message to court, Achillas was clapped in to fill the vacancy, and Theonas set up by the Meletian party, both which dying within three months, Athanasius came quietly into the place. But omitting this as fabulous and inconsistent, no sooner was Alexander dead, but the people of Alexandria became passionately clamorous for Athanasius to succeed,^g universally flocking to the church, and publicly putting up their petitions to God in that behalf, continuing in those devotions day and night; yea, and solemnly adjuring the bishops (who were come to town to settle a new bishop in that see) to consecrate and ordain him, till when they would neither leave the church themselves, nor suffer the bishops to depart: which was no sooner done, but it was entertained with the universal joy and satisfaction both of the clergy and people, manifested by all open signs of festivity and rejoicing, cheerful looks, general confluences to behold the man, and common gratulations and thanks to God for so great a blessing. So spiteful and groundless was the calumny of the Arians, (as the Egyptian bishops, some of which were

^e Ap. Sozom. l. ii. c. 17.

^f Hæres. lxxviii. c. 6. lxxix. c. 11.

^g Epist. Synod. Alex. ap. Athan. c. Arian. s. 6.

present, and did assist at his ordination, in their synodical epistle do observe,) that when upon Alexander's death, both the Catholic and Meletian bishops unanimously agreed to choose a successor,^h and solemnly bound their agreement by an oath, six or seven departing from the rest, retired into an obscure place, and there made choice of Athanasius, of whom very little mention had been made; upon which account many both of the clergy and people refused communion with him. Philostorgius adds,ⁱ that while the bishops were consulting about the election, Athanasius, with some of his party, in the evening went to the church of St. Denys, and finding there two Egyptian bishops, caused the doors to be fast locked, and forced them to ordain him, for which the rest of the bishops denounced an anathema against him, but that he presently despatched away letters to court, in the name of the whole city of Alexandria, as if the thing had been done by common consent, and by that artifice procured the emperor to confirm and ratify the election. But there needs no dispute, who are to be trusted in this matter, whether professed and sworn enemies, whose custom was, to support their cause by arts of craft and falsehood, or those who were themselves present at the action, and made their public protestation, while the thing was but lately done; yea, and solemnly called in (as there they do) the whole city and province to attest it. Not to say that Nazianzen expressly says of him,^k that he came in by the general suffrage of the people, not as his intruding successor, by force and slaughter, ἀλλ' ἀποστολικῶς τε καὶ πνευματικῶς, but after a divine and apostolic manner. His succession happened about the beginning of the year 326, at which time he must be very young, not above twenty-eight years of age. For his childish personating the office of a bishop (when we cannot well suppose him above thirteen or fourteen years old at most) not happening till Alexander was bishop of that church; and Alexander not being advanced to that see till towards the latter end of anno 312, the remainder, till the year after the Nicene synod, will but barely make up the account: an age not very consistent with the ordinary customs and constitutions of the church. But it was thought fit it seems for once, rather to dispense with the rules of ecclesiastic disci-

^h Epist. Synod. Alex. ap. Athan. c. Arian. s. 6. Vid. Sozom. l. ii. c. 17.

ⁱ Lib. ii. c. 11.

^k Orat. xxi. in Athan. p. 377.

pline, than that, at this time especially, the church should want so extraordinary a person, so admirably fit and useful to the present state and exigencies of that church. All which is said upon the supposal that the story of his childish playing the bishop, is certain and unquestionable, which though transmitted to us by a great cloud of witnesses, yet is the whole evidence founded upon the single authority of Rufinus, who, it is plain, was the first reporter of the story; a man infinitely careless in his accounts of things, and who took up this only as a popular tradition at near an hundred years distance from the thing itself. And if that story be set aside, then may Athanasius's birth be carried back into part of the foregoing *seculum*, and a more competent age allowed him at the time of his ordination. And indeed it seems very strange, that the Arians, who narrowly ransacked all the passages of his life, and particularly objected, or rather feigned other irregularities of his ordination, should never mention the incompetency of his years for so great and eminent a station, especially when it seemed to be against the apostles' own canon, and the ordinary rules and practice of the church. But herein I determine nothing, but leave the reader to the conduct of his own judgment, not being willing needlessly to shake the credit of any part of church-history.

II. Athanasius's advancement to the see of Alexandria was not more to the joy and comfort of the Catholics, than it was to the grief and vexation of the Arians. They knew the man, the acuteness of his parts, and his indefatigable zeal in defence of the catholic cause; and if he stickled so hard, both at home and in the synod of Nice, when but in a private capacity, what might they expect he would do, now he was placed in so eminent a station? Wherefore they resolved to unite all their powers against him. And to strengthen their interest, no way appeared more fair and plausible, than to draw over the Meletians to their party; a body of men numerous, and, by reason of the orthodoxy of their principles, of no inconsiderable reputation with the people. Them they endeavour by all means to gain, for which they were now furnished with a fit occasion. Meletius,¹ upon Alexander's return from Nice, had resigned up the churches that were under his superintendency and care, himself quietly living at his own city of Lycus. But a little before his

¹ Sozom. l. ii. c. 21.

death, which happened not long after, besides Arsenius, bishop of Hypselis, he ordained John, otherwise called Arcaph, to be his successor: which being so expressly contrary to the Nicene decrees, gave a new life and resurrection to the schism. This the Arians quickly espied, and began to suggest how unjustly the Meletians had been dealt with in the Nicene council; that the people generally flocked after Athanasius, and the Alexandrian clergy, against whom it was their joint interest to combine, as against a common enemy. And though their designs were vastly different, (the Meletians being as yet untainted in their principles,) yet, as Athanasius observes,^m like Herod and Pontius Pilate, they both agreed against Christ, and dissembling their particular oppositions, entered into a mutual confederacy against the truth; the Meletians being drawn by covetousness and ambition, the Arians by a desire to re-establish and propagate their impieties.

III. One of the first attempts seems to have been the recalling Arius from his banishment, which Sozomen,ⁿ (if he means it of his recalling from exile, and not rather his calling to court,) against all reason, makes not to be till many years after, a little before the synod at Jerusalem, when he and Euzoius presented their confession to the emperor. Certain it is, that Arius was recalled from banishment sometime before Eusebius of Nicomedia; as not only Sozomen himself elsewhere confesses,^o but Eusebius expressly affirms in his petition or declaration to the emperor,^p though forbidden to return to Alexandria, remaining, it is like, amongst his friends and favourers in the East. Not long after, his two great patrons, Eusebius and Theognis, followed him. Three whole years they had continued in banishment,^q when betaking themselves to their old arts, they preferred a bill by way of petition and retractation to the emperor,^r wherein they represent, that they had hitherto submissively acquiesced in the judgment which his majesty had passed upon them; but lest their silence should be thought an argument of their guilt, they declared that they did unanimously agree in the faith, and that having diligently examined the meaning of the word “*consubstantial*,” they had wholly given up themselves to peace, being addicted

^m Ep. ad episc. Ægypt. et Lib. s. 22.

ⁿ Lib. ii. c. 27.

^o Ibid. c. 16.

^p Id. ibid. Socrat. l. i. c. 14.

^q Philost. l. ii. c. 7.

^r Ext. ap. Socrat. et Sozom. locis supra citat.

to no heresy: that for the quiet and security of the church, they had suggested the best counsels they could think of, and had given all necessary satisfaction by subscribing the faith, though they could not the anathematism against Arius, having from the converse they had had with him, both by word and writing, found him not guilty of what was charged upon him. And having done this, they did again ratify their consent by this present libel, not so much that they were weary of their banishment, as desirous to avoid the suspicion of heresy; and that if but admitted into his majesty's presence, he would find them exactly to agree with the faith and decrees of the Nicene synod; which favour they the rather hoped for, his majesty having already so graciously treated the person accounted most criminal, and releasing him from his banishment, had suffered him to vindicate himself from the things charged upon him. Hereupon the sentence of their banishment was taken off, and they were permitted to return to their own sees again. It must not here be forgotten, that the Arians, amongst the many stories they coined to support their cause, vented this: that soon after the synod at Nice,^s Constantine having banished Eusebius, Theognis, and some others, for their obstinate rejecting the consubstantial doctrine, his sister had a vision or revelation from heaven, whereby she was advertised, that those men were orthodox in their opinions, and had those hard measures very unjustly put upon them. That hereupon the emperor recalled them from banishment; and inquiring of them, why, since they had with the rest subscribed the Nicene creed, they dissented from it? received this answer, that they never heartily consented to it; but out of a fear, lest his majesty, but newly converted, and not as yet confirmed by baptism, taking offence at the differences amongst them, should throw up the Christian faith as doubtful and uncertain, return back to Paganism, and turn his resentment and displeasure against the church. Upon this apology he forgave them, and resolved (they say) to call another synod about this matter. But his death preventing that, he left the execution of it to his son Constantius, with this remark, that his empire would never prosper, if he did not bring all his subjects to an agreement in matters of religion; and that in compliance herewith, Constantius summoned the council at Ariminum, which

^s Sozom. l. iii. c. 19.

ratified their faith: a story not very consistent with itself, built only upon a slight and trifling report, and repugnant to the unanimous account of all the writers of those times. Most certain it is, that Constantine the Great, who to his dying day was most constant to the Nicene faith, would never have cancelled the sentence of their banishment upon any other terms, than their subscribing that creed: which we see they accordingly did without any scruple. Of the same thread with this, is the passage related by Philostorgius,¹ that after the Nicene council, and the recantation of Eusebius and his party, (whom the emperor punished for their prevarication in their subscriptions,) Constantine recalled Secundus and his adherents out of banishment, and sent letters or edicts into all parts to suppress and stifle the substantial doctrine, and to ratify the contrary opinion: that Alexander of Alexandria subscribed these letters, and thereupon communicated with Arius and his party; but no sooner was the fear of the emperor's displeasure over, but he returned to his former sentiments in this matter, whereupon Arius and his followers utterly deserted him: an account so improbable in all its circumstances, and so directly contrary to all other writers, that it needs no confutation: forged, no doubt, either by Philostorgius himself, (whom therefore Photius, in the entrance upon it, by a witty allusion to his name, censures, *ὁ φιλοψευδῆς οὗτος κακοστόργιος*,) or handed to him by the Arians of those times, who spread abroad this and many more like relations, to give life and credit to their cause.

IV. Athanasius, in the mean time, like a prudent and a faithful pastor, took an account of the state of his flock, visiting the churches of his diocese,² which, considering the state of that time, he knew could not but be overrun with irregularities, both in faith and discipline. Coming to the province of Maræotis, which was populous, and where presbyters were fixed in every parish, who taught and governed the people in great peace and order, the Meletian schism not being able to set its foot here, he was told that one Ischyras, a man vicious in his morals, and that had never been really taken into ecclesiastic orders, did yet take upon him the title and office of a presbyter, and draw away the people where he lived. Whereupon he despatched away Macarius, his presbyter, and the presbyter of the place, to inquire into the

¹ Lib. ii. c. 1.

² Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 63. Epiph. Hær. lxxviii. c. 6.

matter, and to summon the person. Coming thither, they found the man sick in bed, so that charging his father to let him know, that he should not dare to meddle in the things reported of him, they returned to Athanasius. Ischyras being recovered of his distemper, was advised by his father and his friends, to shift for himself, who thereupon fled to the Meletians, and thence to Nicomedia, the usual refuge of discontented persons, where what mischief he hatched against Athanasius we shall hear afterwards. In this visitation Athanasius is said to have taken in his way the Egyptian monasteries, so famous in the stories of those times, where he was received with all due honour and respect; especially he visited the great St. Anthony, the father of all the hermits of that age,^w there being so great a dearness and intimacy between these two, that, as oft as sent for, St. Anthony would leave his solitudes, and come to Athanasius, meet him in cities, accompany him to church, give testimony to his faith, oppose and condemn his adversaries, write to princes and great men in his behalf, which added no little esteem and reputation to him: though considering the factions and artifices that at this time were on foot against him, he had need of all his friends to stand by him and support him.

V. For Eusebius was no sooner returned to Nicomedia, but he began to set his engines on work for the promoting the Arian cause. His chief design was, to resettle Arius at Alexandria, where he knew the venom would work most effectually: to which end he wrote to Athanasius, smoothly courting him to receive Arius into communion,^x while at the same time, by other hands, he threatened him, if he did refuse. But the good man equally disregarded his entreaties and his threatenings; he sent him word, that Arius was an heretic, and an enemy to the truth, that he had been condemned by a general council, and that such could not be readmitted. Failing in this, he went to work another way, by crafty insinuations engaging the emperor, who now looked upon Arius as conforming himself to the church, to write in his behalf to Athanasius; which he did, being directed by him,^y in a very positive and peremptory manner, commanding him to set open the church-doors to any that were willing to enter in, telling him, that if he knew he excluded any, who

^w Sozom. l. ii. c. 17.

^x Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 59. Socrat. l. i. c. 23.

^y Ext. Pars. liter. ap. Athan. ibid.

were desirous to return to the communion of the church, he would immediately send orders to displace him, and send him far enough off: in which clause of the letter (for part of it only is set down) no particular mention being made of Arius, probable it is, that Eusebius had couched the design only in general terms, representing Athanasius as an enemy to the peace and union of the church. However, trusting in the goodness of his cause, he was nothing startled at this quick and severe message of the emperor, humbly remonstrating by his answer, that the catholic church could not possibly hold communion with that heresy, that plainly subverted the divinity of our Saviour. Eusebius, disappointed in both these attempts, falls now to downright methods of fraud and falsehood, resolving by right or wrong to remove him, who, so long as he stood in their way, would obstruct whatever they took in hand. And first he sends to the Meletians, that now was a fit time to put their confederate councils into practice; who, partly encouraged by his letters, partly to solicit their own cause, viz. the restitution of their churches, deputed three bishops of their party, Isio, Eudæmon, and Callinicus, to go and manage their affairs at court, where, by Eusebius's advice, they forged an accusation against Athanasius, charging him before the emperor, to have exacted linen for the use of his church, and to have imposed it as a tribute upon the people. But Apis and Macarius, two Alexandrian presbyters, happening to be then at court, quickly convinced the emperor of the falseness of the charge; who, condemning the accusers, commanded Athanasius, however, to appear: which when Eusebius understood, he persuaded the Meletians to stand to the cause, and to attack him with new indictments at his arrival. To take off Macarius's evidence, they renew a charge, which they had not long since put in against him, of breaking the communion-chalice; upon Athanasius they clap no less than an indictment of high treason, that he had privily sent a cabinet of gold to one Philumenus, to enable him to usurp the empire. Athanasius being come, his cause was heard at Psammathia, a part of the suburbs of Nicomedia, where the emperor had a palace, (not at Constantinople, as Theodoret makes it,^z which was scarce finished, much less dedicated,) where he so satisfied the emperor in the innocency and integrity of his cause, that his

^z Lib. i. c. 26.

adversaries were condemned, himself acquitted, and not only suffered to depart, but at his return the emperor honoured him with a letter to the church of Alexandria,^a wherein, after he had largely exclaimed against the malice and iniquity of the age, he tells them, that the wicked wretches had prevailed nothing against their bishop, studying nothing but vainly to spend time, and render themselves incapable of pardon; that they should assist one another by mutual concord, and resist those that did oppose it; that as for Athanasius their bishop, he had kindly received him, and conversed with him, as one whom he verily believed to be a man of God, and a most venerable person, and whom he knew to be a minister for his equity and diligence, and other qualities every way necessary for them.

VI. Malice, like fire, must have a vent, or it will be stifled in its own smoke. Eusebius, prevailing nothing against Athanasius, for the present diverts his spleen another way. Eustathius, bishop of Antioch, was a stout stickler against the Arians, and being set in so eminent a see, was capable of doing the greater disservice to the cause: him he singles out, and resolves to hunt him down. In order whereunto, he begs leave of the emperor (at whose charge also he went the journey) to go see the magnificent church which Constantine was then building at Jerusalem.^b Accompanied with his old friend, Theognis of Nice, he came to Antioch, where, pretending friendship, they were kindly and honourably treated by Eustathius. Thence passing through Palestine, they laid the design, which they resolved to effect at their return. For procuring a synod to be called at Antioch, Eustathius is charged as heterodox in the faith; but because they knew that too thin to hold water, they backed it with the accusation of adultery, which they procured to be deposed upon oath, though but the oath of a lewd infamous woman. Whereupon the good man was condemned, and thrown out of his see. And though there were those in the council who smelt the knavery, and persuaded Eustathius not to stand to the sentence of deposition, yet were their enemies too quick for them, having immediately conveyed notice of it to the emperor, to whom they represented the scandal of the crimes, and the great justice of the sentence, persuading the emperor to confirm it, who accordingly ordered him to be banished.

^a Ext. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 61.

^b Theodor. l. i. c. 21.

VII. Though let alone for the present, Athanasius was not forgotten. The business at Antioch being over, they are now at leisure to bait him a second time. For Ischyras, the usurping presbyter, who had some while since fled from Maræotis, having addressed himself to Eusebius of Nicomedia,^c was readily entertained by him as a fit instrument to promote their designs; and to oblige him faster, he is tied with the assurance of a bishopric, which afterwards they made good, creating him bishop of Maræotis, and at present treating him in the capacity of a presbyter. By his contrivance, accusations are framed, and brought into more formal and plausible stories: Athanasius is charged with cruel and tyrannical actings; Macarius, his presbyter, as sent by him, with forcible rushing into the chancel, breaking the communion-cup, and tearing the Bible in pieces; Athanasius indicted of murder, for making away Arsenius, a Meletian bishop, and a dead man's hand produced as evidence of the fact, whereof more in their due place: all which were represented with their greatest aggravations to the emperor. The first he slighted, having himself heard it sufficiently baffled, when Athanasius, not long since, appeared before him at Nicomedia. For that of Arsenius, which seemed to be of most moment, he sent to his brother Dalmatius, the censor, then residing at Antioch, to take the matter under examination. The censor presently writes to Athanasius, commanding him to prepare himself for a trial, and to answer the things laid to his charge. He, conscious of his own innocency, and the prodigious malignity of the fable, at first made light of it, but considering that the emperor had concerned himself in it, he thought it not safe to neglect it. Wherefore he wrote to the bishops of his diocese, to give them notice of it; and sent a deacon to inquire after Arsenius, whom with much ado he found to be alive and well: which was no sooner done, but he despatched away Macarius with letters to the emperor at Constantinople, to give him a true account of the state of things, to put him in mind of what had been transacted at Psammathia, and to assure him that Arsenius, after all, was alive and safe. The emperor, wondering at men's inmoderate boldness and confidence, commanded Dalmatius to surcease the process, and the accusers, who had been sent into the East to manage the charge, to depart from court;

^c Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 63. Socrat. l. i. c. 27.

himself writing to Athanasius,^d to let him know how much he made it his business to preserve truth and justice, and delighted above all others in pious and good men : in which letter he falls upon the Meletians with a very black character, as the most merciless, wicked, and execrable persons, men hardened in impiety, and who attempted the greatest absurdities merely to gratify envy, emulation, and a seditious mind, as was plain in their unjust proceedings against him ; commanding that his letter should be read to the people, that all might take notice of it, especially those whom it most concerned, whom he assured, that if they still proceeded in these practices, he would judge them, not by ecclesiastical, but civil laws, and would make it appear, that they were open invaders, not only of human but of divine constitutions.

VIII. This just and necessary severity of the emperor frightened the Meletians^e at this time from any farther attempts against Athanasius ; the reproaches of their own consciences, and the public fame, causing them to retire with shame and silence. But Eusebius and his party, loth to lose such useful instruments, endeavoured to put new life into them, by assuring them that things should be transacted in a synod, where there was no doubt but they should have the predominant overruling stroke. To effect which, they put it into the emperor's head, that his stately buildings at Jerusalem were now almost finished, and ripe for dedication, for which the bishops of those parts must be called together, that this opportunity might be taken first to settle and compose those differences, which of late had so much disturbed the church, that so they might more unanimously carry on that great solemnity. To this the emperor at length yielded, appointing a synod to be held at Cæsarea in Palestine,^f where the bishops being met, Athanasius did not appear, suspecting, as some think, the partiality of his judges, and liking the place never the better, because Eusebius was bishop of it, whom he looked upon as too favourable to the Arian party : though indeed Athanasius assigns no such reason, nor is this synod so much as once mentioned by him. Long time the bishops waited at Cæsarea, but Athanasius came not ; which his enemies knew well enough how to improve to his disadvantage, telling the emperor, he might now see what little account

^d Ext. Epist. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 68.

^e Id. *ibid.* s. 71.

^f Sozom. l. ii. c. 25. Theodor. l. i. c. 28.

Athanasius made of his commands, who dared thus contumaciously to disobey the imperial orders. The emperor, though otherwise of a mild and easy temper, exasperated with these suggestions, appoints another synod to assemble at Tyre, while things were making ready for the solemnity at Jerusalem, commanding Athanasius at his peril to appear, and summoning such bishops especially as the Eusebians had recommended to him, intending the case should be canvassed and determined in the most public and solemn manner.

SECTION V.

THE ACTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE SYNOD AT TYRE, WITH OTHER CONSEQUENT AFFAIRS.

A synod summoned at Tyre. The emperor's lieutenant appointed to preside there. The sum of Constantine's letter to the council. Athanasius's carriage before the synod. A twofold charge exhibited against him. Matters of vice and immorality in three instances: oppression, and how guilty of that; ravishment, the villany whereof how discovered; murder, his killing Arsenius, and cutting off his hand. The wickedness of this story pursued and refuted at large, and evidently proved before the council. The second head of accusation, impiety and profanation. The case of his ordination inquired into. His violation of Ischyra's church, breaking the communion-cup, &c. Several answers to that charge. Commissioners sent by the synod into Egypt, to examine matters upon the place. Athanasius's exceptions against the persons. All motions in his behalf overruled. The partial and unjust proceedings of the commissioners. The zeal of the Maræotic clergy for their bishop. Athanasius condemned and deposed by the synod at Tyre. The synod adjourned by the emperor to Jerusalem. Arius's cause commanded to be taken under consideration, by means of an Arian presbyter's favour with the emperor. What truth in that report. Arius sent for to court; Constantine's letter to him to that purpose. His and Euzoius's hypocritical confession presented to the emperor. The judgment of the synod about his case. Whether he returned to Alexandria. Upon Athanasius's complaint at court, the bishops are summoned to make good their charge against him. Accused by them of high-treason, and banished by the emperor to Triers. Arius taken into favour at court: Alexander bishop of Constantinople commanded to admit him to communion. The perplexity of the good bishop, and his zealous prayers to heaven. The unnatural and execrable death of Arius, and the manner of it. His character. The description of his temper and person. Intercessions in behalf of Athanasius rejected. The death of Constantine, and division of the empire amongst his sons. The occasion of Constantius's favouring the Arian party.

ANN. Chr. 335, met the council at Tyre,^g consisting of sixty bishops of the East, besides forty-seven that came along with Athanasius out of Egypt, probably not formally summoned thither, but

^g Socrat. l. i. c. 28. Sozom. l. ii. c. 25.

to pay an honourable attendance upon their metropolitan. And because the emperor foresaw that heats and quarrels would arise, he sent Dionysius, a man of consular dignity, to preside as his own commissioner in the synod, to see good order and decorum kept amongst them, himself writing to them to this effect :^h that they would use their utmost endeavour to heal the breaches in the church's peace, the most honourable enterprize they could take in hand ; that for his part nothing had been wanting, that he had granted whatever they desired, summoning what bishops they thought convenient, and sending the exconsular Dionysius to be a witness of their transactions, and their good behaviours, that if any whom it concerned refused to come, he would, by banishment, make them know what it was to disobey the imperial summons ; that nothing now remained, but that they would judge neither for hatred nor favour, but according to the ecclesiastic and apostolic canon, administering proper remedies to all irregularities, that so at once they might free the church from reproach, ease his cares, restore peace and tranquillity to the shattered state of the church, and purchase renown and honour to themselves. At first Athanasius did not appear ;ⁱ not that he distrusted the goodness of his cause, but either because he thought he should not have a fair equal hearing, or that he feared they would innovate something in the Nicene faith : but considering what peremptory orders the emperor had issued out, he came, accompanied with a great number of the bishops of his own province, as witnesses of his integrity, and advocates of his cause ; as his presbyter, Macarius, had a little before been brought thither in chains from Alexandria, with a guard of soldiers to conduct him.

II. Athanasius being brought before the council, had the portion of a criminal to stand at the bar, which so incensed Potamon, one of the Egyptian bishops, that he fell foul upon Eusebius of Cæsarea, one of the synod, when he espied him sitting upon the bench, while Athanasius stood below, reproaching him with some suspicions of idolatrous compliance, while they had been fellow-prisoners under the Diocletian persecution. Athanasius at first demurred, though not to the jurisdiction of the court, yet to the competency and fitness of his judges ;

^h Ext. Epist. ap. Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iv. c. 42. Theodor. l. i. c. 29.

ⁱ Socrat. l. i. c. 28.

which exception not being admitted, his indictment was read, and his crimes openly mentioned. Now the things laid to his charge were especially of two sorts, matters of vice and immorality, and matters of impiety and profanation; for as for the stale accusations of treason and sedition, the levying an imposition of linen cloth upon the people, and conspiring with Philumenus to invade the empire, they had been so notoriously baffled in former attempts, that I find them not so much as once mentioned in the synod, though, to add what colour they could to their sentence, they charge him with contumacy,^k in refusing to obey the emperor's edict, commanding him to appear the year before in the synod at Cæsarea, and that he had now brought so many attendants with him to Tyre, as if he intended to offer force and violence to the council. We shall a little more particularly inquire into the things charged upon him, because objected against him, not only in this, but in some after-synods.

III. In reference to vice and immorality, he stood indicted of three great crimes, oppression, ravishment, and murder.¹ Under the first he was charged with cruel and tyrannical usage of his brethren, that he had often fettered Ischyra, and having accused him before Hyginus, prefect of Egypt, for throwing stones at the emperor's statues, had caused him to be cast into prison; that he had deposed Callinicus, bishop of Pelusium, for refusing to communicate with him, and given his church to one Mark, a degraded presbyter; nay, (if Philostorgius^m may be believed,) that he had laid Callinicus in irons, imprisoned him, and never left prosecuting him, till he had driven him out of the world: thus Euplus, Pachomius, Isaac, Achilles, and Hermæon, Meletian bishops, accused him for having caused them to be whipped and beaten. But seeing these things in all likelihood wanted proof, no more than the bare mention of them being recorded, and that some of them, depending upon other parts of the indictment, fell together with them, it would be needless to insist upon them. The next branch of the charge concerned force and ravishment: that he had offered violence to a woman, whom they had prevailed with to come in to the council,ⁿ and to own and attest the fact; who accordingly declared, that for herself,

^k Sozom. l. ii. c. 25.

¹ Id. *ibid.*

^m Lib. ii. c. 11.

ⁿ Rufin. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 15. Sozom. l. ii. c. 25. Theodor. l. i. c. 30.

she had vowed virginity, but that having entertained Athanasius into her house, he had violently forced her into lewd embraces. Athanasius, who had smelt something of the design, being brought into court, came attended with Timotheus one of his presbyters, between whom it was agreed, that Timotheus should take his part upon him. The judges calling upon Athanasius to answer the matter of fact alleged against him he stood silent, but Timotheus turning to the woman, "Woman, (said he,) was I ever in your house, did I ever, as you pretend, offer violence to you?" To which, with some quickness and vehemency, she replied, stretching out her hand, and pointing to him with her finger, "Yes, yes, you are the man, that forcibly pressed upon me, and stained my chastity and my honour;" adding, as in such cases is usual, both the time and place. The cheat thus plainly discovering itself, put the contrivers of it to the blush; and when Athanasius required, that before the woman was dismissed, she might be asked, who it was that had framed and laid the plot, his just request was overruled by a clamorous answer, that they had greater matters against him to be examined, and for which they had evidence beyond all exception. This passage, Sozomen tells us, was not recorded in the acts of the council, as being thought too light and immodest for the transactions of a grave assembly. Nor is it to be forgotten, that the Arian historian turns the tale quite the other way,^o affirming that Athanasius conspired with the woman, and that, by his direction, she charged her great belly upon Eusebius of Nicomedia, his chief enemy in the synod, who by a much-like stratagem brought it to light. But how much stress is to be laid upon his relations, especially when levelled against the catholic party, the judicious reader needs not be told. And perhaps it might not be the least encouragement to the Arian faction, to shift the scene, and turn it upon Athanasius, that they knew that these proceedings were not entered amongst the acts of the synod, and that there was nothing extant upon record to disprove them.

IV. But that which of all others gave the most pleasant diversion to the synod, (those only excepted who had contrived it,) was the tragi-comic scene of Arsenius the Meletian bishop, the murdering of whom was charged upon Athanasius,^p for proof whereof they produced a box, out of which they took a dead

^o Philost. l. ii. c. 11. ^p Socrat. l. i. c. 27. Sozom. l. ii. c. 25. Theodor. l. i. c. 30.

man's hand, dried and salted, which they affirmed to be the hand of Arsenius whom Athanasius had made away; and to make the wickedness still more enormous, added, that he had done it to magical purposes, to make use of it in arts of diabolic conjurations: the truth and validity of which charge, will best appear by a short survey of the whole matter. Arsenius, who styles himself bishop of Hypsele, whereof Meletius himself had been sometime bishop, having fallen under some great irregularity, had, to avoid the conviction and censure of his metropolitan,^q withdrawn himself. This opportunity John, the chief of the Meletian party, thought fit to embrace, to fasten a most desperate calumny upon Athanasius. For which end he and his confederates find out the man, treat him with all kindness and courtesy, persuade him still to conceal himself, lodging him to that purpose with one Pinnes, one of their confidants, presbyter of a monastery in Thebais. This done, they give it out in all public places, that Athanasius had privately murdered Arsenius, shewing about a dead man's hand, which they affirmed to be his.^r The news hereof was not long before it was by the Eusebians conveyed to the emperor, who gave order to his brother Dalmatius to inquire into it. And though upon notice given him by the censor, he slighted the matter, as a thing sufficiently improbable in itself, yet knowing the malice and subtlety of his enemies, and that the emperor had taken cognizance of it, he thought it not prudent to be unprepared for his own defence. Immediately therefore he sent one of his deacons into Thebais to search for Arsenius, whom he had not seen in many years. The deacon, by the help of Pecosius, Sylvanus, and some other monks, understood at length where he lay concealed. But coming to Pinnes's monastery, and entering the house, they found indeed that he had been there, but that the bird was flown. For upon the first news of their arrival in those parts, Pinnes had clapped him aboard, and by the assistance of Helias, a monk, had conveyed him down into the lower Egypt. Missing the man, they however seized upon Pinnes and Helias, whom they brought to Alexandria, and presented to the governor, before whom they freely confessed that Arsenius was alive and well, and that Athanasius was guiltless and innocent, as Pinnes himself tells John the Meletian

^q Sozom. l. ii. c. 23.

^r Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 63.

bishop in his letter to him :^s all which Athanasius presently certified to the emperor, who by his answer testified how severely he resented the unjust proceedings of that turbulent and malicious party.

V. And thus stood things till the synod at Tyre, when this wretched device was again dressed up, and brought upon the stage; at which time the providence of God strangely furnished him with an opportunity to silence the malice of his adversaries beyond all possibility of evasion. The Meletians had strictly charged Arsenius to keep close ;^t but he, tempted with curiosity to see how things went, had privately conveyed himself to Tyre, intending to lie there *incognito* all the time. It happened that some servants belonging to Archelaus the governor being then at the tavern, heard a rumour whispered, that Arsenius was then in town: which they immediately told their lord, who with equal secrecy and diligence found him out and apprehended him, giving notice of it to Athanasius. The man, unwilling to be false to those that employed him, and loth that the whole frame of the plot should be revealed and unravelled in a moment, at first denied himself to be Arsenius, till Paul bishop of Tyre, who had formerly known him, convinced him, and beat him out of that refuge. The day of the trial being come, and the case of the impudent strumpet dismissed, this of Arsenius was brought on, the prosecutors boasting, that now they should make not their ears, but their very eyes judges in the case, therewith producing the dead hand, which they said Athanasius had dismembered: at which a great shout was made in the synod, many believing it to be true, and others, that nothing could appear to the contrary. Silence being made, Athanasius gravely asked the judges, whether any of them knew Arsenius? which when several affirmed, he commanded him to be brought into court, and again asked, whether this was the person, the man whom he was charged to have killed, and cut off his hand? The case being too notorious to be denied, while men were in a strange surprise and suspense about it, Athanasius turns back the man's cloak, and shews them one of his hands; and after a little pause, to give them time to suspect it might be the other

^s Ext. *ibid.* s. 67.

^t Socrat. l. i. c. 29. Vid. Athan. *Apol.* c. Arian. s. 63. Rufin. l. i. c. 17.

hand, he puts back the other side of the cloak, and shews the other: "and now, gentlemen, (said he), Arsenius you see has both his hands, but where a third hand is to be had that was cut off, I leave to my accusers to discover." Thus ended the plot, not more to the pleasure and satisfaction of the innocent, than to the shame and confusion of the guilty: amongst which John the Meletian bishop, the main contriver of the whole scheme, is said to have slunk away in the crowd; though others, as Theodoret tells us, stood to it,^u railing upon Athanasius for a conjurer, and affirming that by magic arts he had cast a mist before the eyes of the council, endeavouring to exasperate the assembly to tear him in pieces, insomuch that had he not been rescued, the comic scene had been turned into a real tragedy. While others studied to devise something that might look like a plausible excuse,^w saying, with equal truth, that Plusianus, an Athanasian bishop, had, by his command, set on fire Arsenius's house, tied him to a pillar and whipped him, and then shut him up in prison; but that escaping out of a window, he had a long time hid himself, which caused them to imagine him to be dead; and being a considerable person, they thought they could do no less than bring his cause before the magistrate, that it might be examined and sifted out. I add no more concerning this, than that Arsenius himself, together with his presbyters and deacons, wrote to Athanasius to be received to the peace and unity of the church,^x renouncing all commerce with schismatical or heretical persons, and promising all canonical subjection and obedience to him as their lawful metropolitan; desiring him to write to them, and to give notice of their entire agreement with the catholic church. Nay, John himself, repenting of what he had done, confessed the injuries that had been done to Athanasius, and reconciled himself to him, as himself witnessed in his letter to the emperor, whereof Constantine gives an account in his answer to him.^y

VI. We have seen with what success the charge of vice and immorality was managed against this good man; let us next see how he sped in that of impiety and profanation, wherein two articles especially were insisted on. First, that he had

^u Theodor. l. i. c. 30.

^w Sozom. l. ii. c. 25.

^x Ext. Epist. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 69.

^y Ext. *ibid.* s. 70.

procured himself to be created bishop of Alexandria by undue and unlawful means;² that the persons ordaining him were in the very act guilty of perjury, all the bishops having bound themselves, that no man should be ordained, until he had cleared himself of what could be objected against him; that being thus deceived, they had renounced communion with him, who yet was so far from giving them satisfaction, that he forcibly compelled, and cast them into prison: to which purpose a libel was read in the synod, containing some popular exceptions, as if for his sake the people of Alexandria had forsaken the public assemblies. The falsehood of all which is sufficiently evident from the manner of his coming to that see, the Alexandrian synod (many whereof assisted at his consecration) declaring before the whole world,^a that he was elected by common suffrage and consent, and ordained at the unwearied instance and importunity of the people; and that his entrance upon it was so far from being entertained with tumults and murmuring, that it was celebrated with popular triumphs and thanks to God. But that which made a louder noise, was the other branch of the charge,^b viz. that his presbyter Macarius, at his command, and by his authority, had forcibly broken into the chancel, while Ischyras was officiating in the holy ministrations; that he had overturned the communion-table, broken in pieces the sacramental chalice, and burnt the holy books: all which Ischyras was there present to attest. In answer to which, besides some general exceptions that were overruled, we find it alleged,^c that this Ischyras, whom the indictment presented in the capacity of a priest, was really no presbyter, nor ever so accounted by any, but his own relations; that he pretended to no better orders than what Colluthus had conferred upon him, who was himself but a presbyter, and who, for usurping the office of a bishop, had been synodically censured, and the persons ordained by him reduced into the order and class of laics; that when Macarius came thither, Ischyras was sick in bed,^d and consequently incapable of ministering at the holy table; that it was not then the Lord's day,^e the time of their public solemnity; that there was no church in the place where Ischyras lived, nor in the whole

² Sozom. l. ii. c. 25.^a Ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 6.^b Socrat. l. i. c. 27. Sozom. l. ii. c. 25.^c Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 12.^d Ibid. c. 28.^e Ibid. s. 11.

village, Ischyras himself dwelling in a poor farm-house, a parcel of an estate belonging to one Isio an orphan ; that by the confession of their own witnesses, whom they had examined,^f the catechumens were then in the church, and therefore the holy eucharist could not then be administered; who affirmed moreover, that Macarius had not burnt the books, and that what Ischyras said was false ;^g that the presbyters and deacons of that country, who had accompanied Athanasius in his visitation, were his compurgators, solemnly protesting that there was no such matter, and that the whole of the story was forged and fabulous ; finally, that Ischyras himself had confessed the whole plot,^h for being reproached by his own party, and much more by his own conscience, he had with tears addressed himself to Athanasius, and plainly discovered the whole conspiracy, by a writing under his own hand,ⁱ delivered in the presence of six presbyters and eight deacons, whose names are to it ; declaring that he was set on, yea by stripes forced to it, by Heraclides, Isaac, and the rest of their associates ; and that he called God to witness, that he knew nothing of the things charged upon Athanasius, but that he had been compelled to give what testimony he had done, and that he thought himself obliged to make this declaration, heartily wishing he might be admitted to communion with him.

VII. The case being thus clear, (most of these things being no doubt then pleaded by Athanasius,) his accusers were at a stand, and knew not what course to take, till those who were confederate in the council,^k put the matter upon this issue, that the determination of the case should be suspended, and that commissioners should be sent into Egypt, to inquire into the true state of the case, and to report it to the synod, nominating to that end such as they could trust ; Theognis bishop of Nice, Maris of Calcedon, Theodore of Perinthus, Macedonius of Mopsus in Cilicia, Ursacius of Singidunum in Mæsia, and Valens of Mursa in Pannonia, who, together with Ischyras, presently betook themselves to the voyage. By this, Athanasius perceived which way things were like to go ; but not to be wanting to his cause, he put in his exceptions against the commission, which he affirmed to be altogether needless,^l things being plain enough

^f Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 83. ^g Ibid. s. 28. 74. vid. s. 16. ^h Ibid. s. 16. 74.

ⁱ Ext. ibid. s. 64.

^k Socrat. l. i. c. 31.

^l Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 72.

already, that the design of it was only to gain time, and that it was in vain to go so far about to do what they had already resolved should be done. But this not being admitted, he next excepted against the persons, alleging it to be highly unreasonable, that when Macarius was kept prisoner at Tyre, Ischyras should be taken along with the delegates, who themselves were all sworn enemies, by which might be guessed what return was like to be made. And though this exception was infinitely equitable, yet the count Dionysius suffered them to depart. This procedure gave just distaste to all that were friends to the Athanasian cause, the Egyptian bishops not long after presenting a protestation to the synod,^m subscribed by forty-seven bishops, wherein they smartly complained of the fraudulent and mischievous designs of the Eusebian party in the synod, their unjust proceedings against Athanasius, their unfair attempts to engage the rest of the council to own and subscribe their transactions, against which they thought it their duty to protest, and to beseech them, by all that was sacred, not to concur with them, as they would answer the contrary in the great day of their accounts. This they backed with an address to the most illustrious count Dionysius,ⁿ representing, that the Eusebian and Meletian plots and combinations being now so notorious, they could not but offer him their protestation; beseeching and conjuring him, for the sake of Almighty God, not to suffer the synod to proceed any farther in this business, but to reserve the cause to the emperor's own hearing, where they might freely display their case, and where they did not doubt of a righteous issue. This was followed with a letter to Dionysius,^o from Alexander, bishop of Thessalonica, a man of great name and note, and one of the synod; wherein he complained, that by this deputation, it was evident what they designed against Athanasius, that the thing had been acted without his privity, that he should advise them to do nothing rashly, and take care that no inconvenience might arise, nor any thing be herein acted, that might reflect upon them, and expose the justice of the synod to reproach. Dionysius, alarmed with all these addresses, sent a note to Eusebius and his party,^p acquainting them, that things happened just as he had foretold; that Athanasius would complain of injurious dealing, and the persons delegated; that he had advised them that none

^m Ext. *ibid.* s. 77.ⁿ Ext. *ibid.* s. 79.^o Ext. *ibid.* s. 80.^p Ext. *ibid.*

should be sent but by common suffrage; that therefore they should take care, that what was done might not be liable to just exception, or give the least shadow of occasion to any to bespatter their proceedings, it being unfit that the criminal party should be suppressed and kept under any more than that of the plaintiff; and that it would create a mighty jealousy in this case, if Alexander should refuse to concur with them. Notwithstanding all which endeavours, Athanasius, finding that he could not with safety remain at Tyre, where all arts were used to enrage the people, insomuch that the secular arm was sometimes forced to be called in to his rescue, that a righteous cause was not like there to take place, that there were small hopes either that the delegates would be recalled, or his case referred to the emperor, thought it best to shift for himself in time, and to present his petition to a higher power, in order whereunto he absented from the synod,^q and privately withdrew himself.

VIII. The commissioners in the mean while were arrived at Alexandria,^r where they carried themselves like men resolved to go through with their work, endeavouring to extort confessions by drawn swords, whips, clubs, and all methods of cruelty and severity, not sparing even the devoted virgins, whom they suffered the very Gentiles to strip naked, drag to the heathen altars, and treat with all manner of extravagant abuses; the infidels petulantly insulting over the church, and doing these things in the very house where the commissioners resided, who at the same time were feasting and making merry within, though it was then the time of a solemn fast. The clergy of Alexandria offered themselves to attend the commissioners, desiring they might be admitted to give in evidence, or at least to be present at the examinations that were taken, that so they might be able to credit and to justify the proceedings, but were refused; whereupon not long after they presented a remonstrance, subscribed by fifteen presbyters and four deacons,^s to the delegates, wherein they tell them what fair and reasonable demands they had made, professing that they looked for nothing but malicious combinations from them, whereof this their letter (a copy whereof they had delivered to Palladius the emperor's officer, that they might not suppress it) would be a standing monument, whenever the

^q Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 82. Socrat. l. i. c. 32.

^r Epist. Synod. Alex. ap. Athan. *ibid.* s. 14, 15.

^s Ext. *ibid.* s. 73.

case came to be canvassed over again in a lawful synod. From Alexandria, accompanied with Philagrius, governor of Egypt,^t they went into Maræotes, the proper scene where the plot was laid, where they kept court in Ischyras's house, the governor attending them all the while with a guard of soldiers, that they might cite whom they pleased, and terrify whom they cited, especially keep out the ecclesiastics; for the clergy of the country universally offered themselves to examination, desiring they might be allowed to give in their testimonies, but were rejected and excluded, and instead of them, Jews and Gentiles summoned, and any kind of evidence given and taken, and questions openly asked about the sacraments and mysteries of religion, which ought not have been propounded to catechumens, much less to Pagans and infidels. Besides, their own witnesses contradicted themselves in their answers,^u and some of them openly denied part of the charge, and gave Ischyras the lie. All which appeared from the acts and records, taken and kept by themselves, which though they suppressed with all imaginable diligence, charging the notaries that no copies of them should come abroad, yet were they brought to light, Rufus, who drew them up, betraying them, and the Eusebians themselves afterwards transmitting them to Rome. The Maræotic clergy being not able to prevail, presented a petition however to Philagrius,^w and the other great officers, declaring the falsehood of the crimes charged by Ischyras, and praying that the case might be heard before the emperor. They wrote also to the synod at Tyre, in which letter^x (subscribed by fifteen presbyters, and as many deacons) they truly represent the case of Ischyras, purge Athanasius from the charge, both from their own knowledge and Ischyras's confession extant under his own hand, and assure them that not one word would have been spoken against Athanasius, had it not been extorted by the governor's threatenings, or drawn out by the flattery and insinuation of the Arians, whereby some men had been tempted to say whatever they had a mind should be attested: all which they tell them they testified as in the presence of God, and for which they knew they must be accountable at the divine tribunal.

^t Ibid. s. 14. vid. s. 10, 11.

^w Ext. ibid. s. 75.

^u Ibid. s. 83.

^x Ext. ibid. s. 74.

IX. The delegates having patched up what evidence they could any ways rake together,^y returned to Tyre, where, Athanasius being fled, it was no hard matter to procure his condemnation, the synod accordingly passing sentence upon him, deposing him from his bishopric, and ordering that he should no more inhabit at Alexandria, lest his presence there should create tumults and factions. John the Meletian bishop and his party they restored to communion, and to the rights of their ministry; sent an account of their transactions to the emperor, and letters to the bishops abroad, not to communicate with Athanasius, whom they had convicted of several enormous crimes, and of which he by his flight had confessed himself guilty. Not but that there were many in the synod that were willing to have done him right, but were overpowered by numbers, and particularly Paphnutius, the confessor, is said to have taken Maximus, bishop of Jerusalem, by the hand, "Let us be gone, (said he,) it is not becoming confessors, who have lost their limbs in the cause of religion, to go along with such pernicious company." Things were thus concluding at Tyre, when Marianus, the emperor's secretary, came with letters, commanding the synod to adjourn to Jerusalem,^z to celebrate the dedication of a famous church, which he had built to the honour of our Saviour: where being met by several others, and the great solemnity being over, a message came from the emperor, that they should take Arius's case into consideration. For it seems some designs had been of late on foot to bring Arius into favour at court, at least so far as to engage the emperor to recommend him to the synod, which, we are told,^a was effected in this manner.

X. An Arian priest, whose name was Eutocius,^b or, as Vigilus Tapsensis calls him,^c Evangelus, (if at least he means it as a proper name,) had subtilely insinuated himself into the favour of Constantia, the emperor's sister, and taking the softest seasons of address, had represented the hard fate of Arius, oppressed merely by envy and private emulation. She, upon her death-bed, as her last request, had bequeathed this presbyter to her bro-

^y Socrat. l. i. c. 32. Sozom. l. ii. c. 25. Philost. l. ii. c. 11.

^z Socrat. l. i. c. 33. Sozom. l. ii. c. 26. Theodor. l. i. c. 31.

^a Rufin. l. i. c. 11. Sozom. l. ii. c. 27. Socrat. l. i. c. 25.

^b Gelas. Cyz. ap. Phot. Cod. LXXXVIII.

^c Dial. contr. Arian. l. i. c. 2.

ther's grace and care, expressing a great solicitude, lest some great judgment should overtake either him or the empire, while just and good men were under banishment. The priest, after her decease, plied the emperor with such effectual solicitations, that he gave his consent that he should be recalled, and his case taken into a re-examination. This passage a learned man suspects as groundless and improbable.^d And, indeed, it seems shrewdly to shake the credit of the story, not only that the priest is so obscurely mentioned, but that Athanasius, who is punctual in noting all the artifices of the Arian party, giveth not the least intimation of it. It is possible, at first it might be nothing but a light rumour whispered about, (as in all dissensions there are tales told on both sides, the effects only of jealousy and surmise,) which Rufinus catching up, first gave it an historical credit, and so, without any scruple, handed it down to others. But however it was, (for I am not willing absolutely to reject the story, handed to us not only by the authority of Rufinus, but Socrates and others,) the emperor declared, that if Arius subscribed to the faith established in the Nicene council, he was content that he should come to court, and would honourably dismiss and send him home to Alexandria. In order whereunto he wrote to him this short letter.^e

“Constantine the Great, the August, the Conqueror, to Arius.

“It is sometime since that I gave notice to your gravity, that you should come to court, that so you might enjoy the comfort and honour of our presence. And strange it seems to us, that you should not immediately comply with it. Wherefore make use of the public conveyance, and with all speed repair to us, that having tasted of our kindness and bounty, you may return into your own country. God preserve you, dear brother. Dated November the 26th.”

Upon the receipt of this letter, away posts Arius to Constantinople, attended with his friend Euzoius, the companion both of his faith and fortunes, where they present to the emperor a new confession of their faith,^f leaving out the more gross and

^d Vales. Annot. ad Socrat. l. i. c. 25.

^e Ext. ap. Socrat. l. i. c. 25.

^f Ext. ap. Socrat. l. i. c. 26. et Sozom. l. ii. c. 27.

scandalous terms, and expressing things in more plausible phrases, and such as were more agreeable to the style of the holy scriptures, which they introduce with this preface: "To our most religious and gracious lord, the emperor Constantine, Arius and Euzoius, presbyters. According to the command of your devout piety, we have, sir, explained the faith we hold, and by this writing do, in the presence of God, profess, that both we ourselves, and all that are of our party, do believe according to the tenor of the confession following. We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, his Son, begotten of him before all worlds, being God the Word, by whom all things were made both in heaven and earth; who came down from heaven, and was incarnate, suffered, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, and shall come again to judge the quick and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost; the resurrection of the flesh, the life of the world to come, the kingdom of heaven, and in one catholic church of God, dispersed from one end of the world to the other. This faith we have received out of the holy gospel, especially that command of our Lord to his apostles, Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And these things they professed they believed, and that they really owned the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the doctrine of the scriptures, and the faith of the whole catholic church; "which if we do not," (it is their own anathema in their own words,) "God be our judge, both in this world and in that to come." Wherefore they pray, that by his mediation they might be united to the church, their mother; and that all needless questions and disputes laid aside, they might peaceably accord, and unanimously pray for his majesty's prosperity and safety.

XI. The good emperor was infinitely pleased, that he thought Arius and his party now reconciled to the Nicene faith: upon whose leave granted, Socrates says,^g (if he be not mistaken in his account, for Athanasius himself mentions it not,) he returned to Alexandria, where he no sooner arrived, but Athanasius stoutly opposed him. Hereof Eusebius complained at court, beseeching the emperor to write in his behalf. Notwithstanding whose powerful intercession, Athanasius absolutely refused to admit the man to communion, writing back to the emperor, that

^g Lib. i. c. 27. Sozom. l. ii. c. 29.

they who had once violated and denied the faith, and had been cast out of the church, could not easily be taken in again to an entire communion. The emperor was angry that his mediation was not complied with, and sent back Athanasius a threatening message,^b that unless, upon the receipt of this order, he immediately submitted to it, and readily received all that were desirous to return to the communion of the church, he would send one that should turn him out of his station, and send him far enough to some other place. But this not succeeding, or the emperor at least not yet willing to proceed to such extreme courses, he recommended Arius and his friends to the synod at Jerusalem, to examine their confession, and pass a candid judgment upon their case. The synod presently set the case before them, and approving the declaration of their faith,ⁱ decreed, that Arius and his adherents should be received into communion, which was done accordingly: whereof they gave an account both to the emperor,^j and to the church of Alexandria; persuading them kindly to entertain them, whose faith the emperor had pronounced to be sound and orthodox, and whose judgment therein had been ratified by the sentence of the whole synod, who had received them to communion; that therefore it would become them heartily to embrace them as fellow-members of the church, and to live in peace, especially since, by the declaration of their faith, they had made it evident, that they kept to the undoubted and approved apostolic doctrine that had been delivered to the church. The council was not broken up, when the wind seemed to turn into another corner, a new message arriving from the emperor, about the cause of Athanasius: for which we are to know, that Athanasius, finding the malice of his enemies inflexible,^k and that the count Dionysius was resolved to overrule all against him, upon his retreat from Tyre, had made his address at court, where he met the emperor on horseback, entering into Constantinople, who at first sight knew him not, till told who he was, and what his case; nor after several addresses could he get any access, till he took the confidence freely to tell the emperor, that he desired no more, than that he would not suffer him to be ruined by malice and violence; that his

^b Ext. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 59.

ⁱ Socrat. l. i. c. 33.

^j Ext. liter. ap. Athan. de Synod. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 21. Sozom. l. ii. c. 23.

^k Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 9.

cause might be debated and determined in a lawful and impartial synod; at least, that his judges at Tyre might be brought face to face, and he have the liberty to exhibit his complaints against them: which the emperor looking upon as a piece of common justice, despatched away a letter to the synod at Jerusalem,^l commanding those of them that had acted in the council of Tyre to appear before him, and give an account of their proceedings therein against Athanasius. The bishops were strangely startled at this message; the greatest part of whom, fearing what might be the consequence of things, stole away, and returned home.^m But Eusebius, Theognis, Maris, Patrophilus, Ursacius, and Valens, resolving, if possible, to justify what they had done, went to Constantinople, where they boldly maintained that they had done nothing but according to rules of justice; but, however, wisely waived the insisting upon the old calumnies of the cup, and the table, and the death of Arsenius, which they knew were not defendable at a fair and impartial audit, and agreed to attack him with a fresh accusation,ⁿ charging him, that he had threatened to stop the fleet that yearly transported corn from Alexandria to Constantinople, which they offered to make good by the evidence of Adamantius, Anubio, Arbæthio, and Peter, all bishops, who heard it from his own mouth. And when Athanasius urged this to be highly incredible, it being altogether improbable, that so poor and inconsiderable a person as he was should be able to do this; Eusebius replied, and confirmed it with an oath, that Athanasius was rich, and had power and interest enough to effect what he had threatened. The emperor, giving credit to the reporters of the story, expressed a just resentment at it, as princes are never more tender and jealous, than of the rights and privileges of their crowns, and forthwith commanded him to be banished.^o Though there are that think the emperor did this as an expedient for peace, knowing that while the heads remained, the two parties would never be brought to any tolerable union; others, more probably, that the emperor took this opportunity, by sending Athanasius out of the way, to provide at present for his security, whose life he knew to be perpetually in danger by the restless attempts and machinations

^l Ext. ap. Socrat. l. i. c. 34. et Sozom. l. ii. c. 28.

^m Socrat. l. i. c. 35. Sozom. *ibid.*

ⁿ Vid. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 9.

^o Socrat. et Sozom. *loc. supra cit.* Theodor. l. i. c. 31.

of his enemies; and this not only Athanasius himself affirms, but the younger Constantine^p (who may be presumed to know as much of his father's mind as any) expressly says so in his letter to the catholic church of Alexandria.^q However, the good man looked upon it as a mercy,^r that when his adversaries designed his death, the goodness of God, and clemency of the emperor, turned it only into banishment. Sentence being passed, he was presently transported to Triers, an ancient and famous city of the Belgic Gallia, the place appointed for his exile, after which he never saw the emperor more.

XII. Athanasius being thus rid out of the way, the Eusebians carried all before them without control; by the help of a few more bishops that were summoned to court,^s they held a synod, wherein they condemned and deposed Marcellus, bishop of Ancyra, upon pretence of some false and heretical doctrines, ordered his books to be burnt, and placed another in his see. But their chief eye was upon Arius,^t who, after his restitution in the synod at Jerusalem, had returned in triumph unto Alexandria, where he met not with that welcome entertainment that he imagined; the people generally stood off, refusing to communicate with him, which put them afresh into disorder and confusion, equally vexed at the return of Arius, and the banishment of Athanasius. Notice whereof being conveyed to Constantinople, he was again summoned thither to give an account of himself to the emperor and the synod. Alexander, the aged bishop of that place, foreseeing what designs were in hand, laboured all that he could, that the synod might be dissolved, which when he could not obtain, he set himself with an immovable resolution to oppose whatever might subvert the Nicene faith. No sooner was Arius arrived, but Eusebius openly appeared his patron, telling Alexander to his face, that unless he received Arius within such a time, he would drive him out of the church, and send him into banishment, and that the glory of it should be reserved for his successor. To satisfy the emperor in his doubts, Eusebius introduces him at court,^u where he again presents an account of his faith; and when the emperor asked him, whether he heartily

^p Epist. ad Monachos. s. 50.

^r Ibid. s. 9.

^t Socrat. l. i. c. 37. Sozom. l. ii. c. 29.

^u Athan. Ep. ad Episc. Ægypt. et Lib. s. 13. Epist. ad Scrap. de mort. Arij. s. 2.

^q Ap. Athan. c. Arian. s. 87.

^s Socrat. l. i. c. 36.

believed what he professed, without any secret reservation, he assured him he did, and ratified his assurance by an oath: to whom the emperor replied, if thy faith be right, thou hast sworn well; but if otherwise, thou art forsworn, and God will revenge thy perjury. Socrates adds, that the tradition went, that having written his opinions in a paper, which he kept under his arm, when he came into the emperor's presence, he secretly laid his hand upon the paper, and swore, that from his heart he believed as he had written. The emperor, fully satisfied that the man meant honestly, as he professed, sent command to Alexander to receive him to the peace and communion of the church.

XIII. The good bishop was infinitely perplexed at what he saw was like to come upon him. But he armed himself with patience and courage; and by prayers and fasting, and all the methods of holy devotion, solicited heaven to come in to his assistance: and it was not without great cause, it being a potent and an insolent faction that he had to deal with. Elated they were with the prosperous success of their affairs, and were scarce got out of the court gates, when they went directly to the church called Irene,^v where the bishop then was, demanding that Arius might be presently brought into the church. But Alexander plainly told them, he could not do it, that so arch an heretic could not be admitted to communion. It was now Saturday, and in expectation of the next day's solemnities they parted at present with this farewell, "As against your consent we procured him to be called to court, so to-morrow in this very church he shall join and assemble with us, whether you will or no." These bold words made a deep impression upon his mind, but shutting to the church doors, attended with none but Macarius, he prostrated himself before the altar, and sent up this prayer to heaven: "If, Lord, thou permittest Arius to communicate to-morrow, suffer me, thy servant, to depart, and destroy not the righteous with the wicked. But if thou sparest thy church, as I know thou wilt, have respect to the threatenings of the Eusebian party, and give not over thine heritage to ruin and reproach. Take Arius out of the way, lest entering into the church, heresy enter together with him, and hereafter piety and impiety be accounted both alike." Thus he prayed, and heaven

^v Athan. locis supr. cit. Socrat. et Sozom. ubi supr. Theodor. l. i. c. 14. Epiph. Hæres. lxxviii. c. 5. lxxix. c. 10. Niceph. l. viii. c. 51.

heard his prayer, and signed a warrant for the execution. For that very evening, or, as others report, the next morning, Arius going through the streets with a pompous train of his friends and followers, swelled with the hopes of to-morrow's triumphs, was come to a place called Sigma in Constantine's forum, famous for the porphyry pillar erected there, (whereon stood a statue of Constantine, called *Ἀνθῆλιος*, because placed opposite to the rising sun,) when he found himself necessitated to inquire for a place of easement, and being told there was one on the back-side of the market-place, he went thither; where his spirits suddenly failing, the fate of treacherous and apostate Judas became his portion, he fell headlong, and bursting asunder in the midst, immediately expired. Socrates and others say, that the bowels, and all the intestina, with a vast flux of blood, issued out at the postern passage. His friends impatiently expect his return, till it seeming longer than ordinary, some went to call him, and Eusebius, more forward than the rest, reproached his backwardness and neglect both of his friends and himself; but hearing no answer, they went in, and there found the wretch wallowing in his own filth and blood. His followers were strangely surprised with the accident, which they could not but look upon as a fatal blow to their cause; though to cover as much as might be the shame and terror of so infamous a death, they fled to their old refuge of lies and falsehood, giving it out, that his death was procured by sorcery and magic arts. But the account we have given of it, is that which Athanasius assures us he received from his own presbyter Macarius, then present at Constantinople, when the thing was done. He was buried by his own party, who yet could not bury the dishonourable memory of his ruin, the very place of his death being accounted execrable; till afterwards a wealthy Arian purchased it of the state, and built an house upon it.

XIV. His death happened Ann. Chr. 336, though a learned man will have him to die some years before,^w but fixes no certain time; and tells us, that the Arius who, together with Euzoios, was restored in the synod at Jerusalem, was not ours, the head of the faction, but another of the same name. But as all this is said without any just ground from story, not affirmed, not intimated by any one writer, so he makes the writers of those times

^w Vales. Observ. Eccles. l. ii. c. 2. Annot. ad Sozom. l. ii. c. 30.

to proceed upon an unpardonable mistake, who constantly speak of him as one and the same person. As wide on the other extreme is Zonaras,^x who makes his death, and the passages that immediately preceded it, to have happened several years after, in the reign of Constantius. Indeed several there are that tell us,^y that Arius flourished and was in great favour with Constantius: a report, which if it has any thing of truth and solidity in it, must be meant of the other Arius, his companion and partner, who perhaps survived ours, and gave occasion to the mistake. Thus died Arius, the great incendiary of the church; and happy had it been, had his schism and his principles died with him. He was a man whom nature had furnished with acute parts, and industry with no inconsiderable learning; a quick subtle disputant, ἀνὴρ διαλεκτικώτατος, as they all confess, one that knew how to make the best of a bad cause, and where to take advantage of an enemy: a man of a versatile and mercurial wit, and who could put himself into any shape, and steer any course, that might gain the point he aimed at. He was of a daring temper, who durst speak what he thought, and attempt what he designed; proud and conceited of himself, and, as the natural effect of that, factious and unquiet, exasperated by opposition, and that stuck the faster to his opinions, the more they were battered and assaulted. Books he wrote, but such only as ministered to his purposes, composing poems of several sorts,^z ναυτικὰ, ἐπιμύλια, ὄδοπορικὰ, for seamen, for millers, for travellers, fitted both for tune and matter, as might best suit with each man's genius and way of life; these he dispersed amongst the people, great numbers whereof he by this means drew after him. But amongst all the rest, his book intituled Thalia was most eminent,^a so often cited by Athanasius, and at least as to the doctrine contained in it, expressly condemned in the synod of Nice, wherein he represented his principles, and discoursed of the most grave and venerable mysteries in a loose and soft kind of verses, in imitation of Sotades, the Cretan poet,^b who treated of the most filthy subjects in wanton and obscene iambics. If, after all, any one desires to know in what

^x Annal. l. xiii. c. 11.

^y Oros. Hist. l. vii. c. 29. Rufin. l. i. c. 11. In fin. vit. Ath. ap. Phot. Cod. CCLVIII.

^z Philost. l. ii. c. 2.

^a Vid. Athan. contr. Arian. Orat. i. s. 2.

^b Suid. in voc. Σωτράδης.

kind of tenement this odd soul of his did inhabit, he was, as to his outward shape,^c very tall, lean, and meagre; of a pale, dejected, and melancholy countenance; careless in his garb, his hair long and squalid, his coat hanging only upon one shoulder, and his whole mien and dress so deformed and uncomely, that he seemed *ὡς ὄλος ἡμιθνής*, as one altogether half dead as he went along; so that nature as well as art had formed him to a great appearance of mortification, and contempt of the world, and they who looked no farther than the outward shape, would have taken him for a man of singular piety; whence Rufinus^d says of him, that he was *Vir specie et forma magis, quam virtute religiosus*. His voice was shrill and sharp, but his discourse plausible and insinuating, and his address such, as whereby he knew how to win upon those whom he had to deal with; in short, as Epiphanius characterizes him, he was shaped like a serpent, and, like that too, crafty and subtle, and that could easily wind and screw in himself.

XV. Great hopes were conceived, that upon Arius's death, the schism would have expired, at least the stream have much abated. But the spirits of the party were still kept up, and the controversy fermented as high as ever at Alexandria,^e where the Arian and Meletian party studied all ways to undermine and supplant the Catholics; the people of Alexandria on the other side incessantly exclaiming against them, and offering up public supplications for Athanasius's restitution: the great St. Anthony, the hermit, frequently also by letters interceding with the emperor, not to hearken to the Meletians, but to esteem their accusations as no better than slanders and reproaches. But no solicitations could prevail; the emperor wrote back to the people of Alexandria, upbraiding their wildness and disorders, commanding the clergy and religious virgins to be quiet, assuring them that he could not alter his mind, nor recall Athanasius, who in an ecclesiastical judicature had been condemned as turbulent and seditious. To St. Anthony he returned this answer, that he was not one that could make light of the synodical sentence: "For admit (said he) that some few might judge for favour or hatred, yet it cannot be thought that so great an as-

^c Epiph. Hæres. lxi. p. 311. Const. Imp. Epist. ad Arian. ap. Gelas. Cyz. l. iii. c. 1. Nicet. Thes. Orth. Fid. l. v. c. 1.

^d Lib. i. c. 1. non longe ab init.

^e Sozom. l. ii. c. 31.

sembly of good men, of wise and prudent prelates, should do so too, who had condemned him for being arrogant and injurious, and the cause of discord and sedition." These being the crimes which his adversaries had chiefly insisted upon, as knowing that the emperor had a particular aversion to such kind of men. But though he would not recede from his resolution in this case, yet to shew himself impartial, and take off what might be the heats on both sides, he banished John the Meletian bishop, the main-spring and head of the faction, from which the judgment and decree of the late Tyrian synod could not relieve and save him.

XVI. The following year, anno 337, put a period to the life of Constantine the Great. Finding himself ill, he removed from Constantinople to Nicomedia,^f where he made his will, and divided the empire between his three sons, Constantine, Constans, and Constantius; to the first he assigned Britain, Spain, Gaul, and the Alps; to the second, Italy, Africa, Greece, and Illyricum; to the third, (his second son,) Thrace, Asia, Egypt, and the East. His will being sealed up, he put it into the custody of the Arian presbyter, (of whom before,) commanding him to deliver it to none, but into the hands of Constantius, though others say Constantine, but that the priest, expressly contrary to his order, delivered it to Constantius. But it seems very unreasonable to suppose, that when he had so many great officers of state, so many bishops of note about him, he should choose to intrust so important an affair with one obscure single presbyter. More probable is the account which Philostorgius gives,^g that he delivered his will to Eusebius bishop of Nicomedia, by whom he is generally thought to have been baptized; and adds, moreover, that fearing lest Constantine's brothers, (who, he tells us, had hastened his end by poison,) suspecting (what indeed he had ordered) that his successors should punish the procurers of his death, might demand it of him, he put it into the deceased emperor's hand, and covered it with his imperial robe: and when the confederates, as he suspected, came to require it of him, he told them, that he did receive it indeed, but had returned it back into Constantine's own hand. And having thus deluded them, delivered it to Constantius, who being then in the East,

^f Socrat. l. i. c. 39. Sozom. l. ii. c. 34. Act. Metroph. ap. Phot. Cod. CCLVI. Vit. Athan. *ibid.* Cod. CCLVIII.

^g Lib. ii. c. 16.

was the first that arrived after his father's death: an opportunity which no doubt he improved with that prince to espouse the patronage of the Arian cause. This report of Constantine's being poisoned by his brothers, and his ordering his son to revenge his death, has very little warrant to support its credit. It is not once mentioned by any Gentile writer of that age, (whom we cannot suppose willing to conceal it,) and by few Christians, and those too^h (Philostorgius excepted) of a later date. Probable it is, that such a rumour might be spread abroad, and I am apt to think Constantius was willing to believe it, at least to lay hold of this opportunity to rid himself of those whom he was jealous of, in that we find him, soon after his father's death, despatching his uncles into another world. The death of this good emperor was universally bewailed, though certainly by none with greater reason than the Catholics: for though the easiness of his temper, and his passionate desire of peace,ⁱ made him liable to be imposed upon by crafty councils, and to be drawn to some severity against Athanasius, yet was he ever a firm and resolute defender of the Nicene faith, against which, while he lived, none durst openly appear; wherein he was more confirmed, after he had seen the ruin of Arius, and the remarkable vengeance that from heaven had immediately fallen upon him.

SECTION VI.

ATHANASIUS'S ACTS, FROM HIS RETURN FROM EXILE TILL THE
SYNOD AT SARDICA.

Athanasius's treatment at Triers. Is released, and sent home with a letter from the younger Constantine. The time of his exile adjusted. The joy expressed at his return. The faction at court made against him. The license taken in disputing matters of faith. The Eusebian party appear vigorously against him. A synod holden by him at Alexandria, which asserts the innocency of his cause. His messengers at Rome encounter with and baffle them of the Eusebian faction. A more general council consented to on both sides. A council summoned at Antioch, upon what occasion. The number of bishops that met in it. The confession of faith indited by them. Some other confessions drawn up by the same synod, and why. Their canons. Athanasius deposed. His see refused by Eusebius Emisenus, accepted by Gregory of Cappadocia. Athanasius's retirement to Rome. Pope Julius's message to them at

^h Philost. Zonar. Cedrenus, etc.ⁱ Vid. Theodor. l. i. c. 33.

Antioch, and their peremptory answer. Athanasius absolved in a synod at Rome. Julius's letter to the synod at Antioch. Gregory settled in the see of Alexandria by the secular powers. The cruelties and barbarities committed at the time. Gregory's servile courting great men. The miserable end of his patron Balacius. Gregory's legates rejected at Rome. Athanasius how employed during his long stay there. The Creed that goes under his name shewed not to be his. A new confession of faith drawn up at Antioch, and sent to the court of Constans in the West. This rejected in a synod at Milan. Ursacius and Valens, their recantation. Athanasius's converse with the emperor.

BUT it is time now to look back, and see what became of Athanasius. No sooner did he arrive at Triers, but he sat down under the protection of the younger Constantine, who governed the western parts of the empire, and kept his court in that city, to whose care, as well as jurisdiction, he had been particularly consigned by the emperor, and who accordingly received him with all demonstrations of kindness and condescension. But he was especially welcome to, and honourably entertained by Maximinus, bishop of that see. Though St. Jerome,^k who relates the passage, places it at least seven years after, and refers it to the times of his being persecuted by Constantius: which must either be a mistake, or be understood of some other coming of his to this place. For I dare not, with Baronius,^l for Constantius read Constantine, both because what St. Jerome says of his being hunted out in order to his punishment, agrees not so well with Constantine's carriage towards him, and because the date under which it is placed is incapable of being reconciled with the times of Constantine. How Athanasius spent his time in this place, is not certainly known; no doubt to the purposes of piety and religion, and to the comfort and establishment of the Christians there. As for the story of his being forced to hide himself in a well, (which tradition points out at this day,) to avoid the fury of the Arians, and that there he composed the creed that passes under his name,^m they are reports so groundless and trifling, such thick and palpable mistakes, that I think it not worth while to take notice of them. Nor indeed are Baronius and other grave authors willing that Triers should carry away the glory of that creed, and therefore stiffly contend that it was drawn up at Rome; while Possevine,ⁿ loth that any place should lose the honour of it, thinks it probable that Athanasius

^k Chron. ad Ann. Chr. 344.

^l Ad Ann. 336. num. 21.

^m Durand. Rational. l. iv. c. 25.

ⁿ App. sac. v. Athan.

dictated and divulged it wherever he came. But of that confession we shall speak more afterwards. Here he continued till the death of Constantine the Great, the news whereof no sooner flew over hither, but Constantine, being eldest son, began to act as heir to his father's power and greatness; and amongst the first cares of his empire, took into consideration the case of Athanasius, whose hard fate he pitied. Indeed Constantine himself designed his releasement before he died, yea, and took care for it, they say, by his last will and testament; though Eusebius of Nicomedia, who then stood by his bed-side, opposed it, and earnestly dissuaded him from it. But his death happening soon after, left it to his son to perfect what he had designed; who, according to his father's will, immediately gave him leave to return, and recommended him to his people by this following letter.^o

“Constantine Cæsar to the People of the Catholic Church at Alexandria.

“I suppose you are not ignorant, that Athanasius, preacher of the venerable law, was therefore for a time sent into Gaul, lest the fierceness of his bloody and inhuman enemies, who struck directly at his sacred person, might bring incurable mischiefs upon him. To prevent which, he was sent out of the reach of those who had designs upon his life; and was commanded to remain under my jurisdiction, that so in this city, wherein he has sojourned, he might be furnished with all necessary accommodations: though such his incomparable courage and virtue, that being supported by the divine assistance, he made light of all the burdens and hardships of an afflictive fortune. Now forasmuch as our lord and father of blessed memory, Constantine the August, was fully resolved to have restored the said bishop both to your excellent piety, and his proper station, but being prevented by the law of mortality, before he could put this his purpose into execution, is gone to the place of rest, I thought myself concerned, in pursuance of the will of this prince of sacred memory, to make it good. With how much respect and reverence we have treated him, himself at his arrival will declare to you. Nor is it any wonder, that I should do this

^o Ext. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 87. Soerat. l. ii. c. 3. Sozom. l. iii. c. 2. Theodor. l. ii. c. 2.

for him, since both the reflection upon your earnest expectation, and the sight of so excellent a person, moved and engaged me to it. The divine Providence preserve you, dear brethren.

“Dated at Triers, the 15th of the Calends of July.”

II. This letter, dated July 18th, while Constantine was yet Cæsar, (the division of the empire between the three brothers, at what time they took the title of Augusti upon them,^p not being till the 9th of September following,) plainly shews that it was written within two months after his father's death, who departed this life May the 22nd: by which it is evident that Athanasius continued not in his German exile much above a year and a half, the sentence of banishment being denounced against him not long after the synod at Jerusalem, (held towards the latter end of the year 335,) and his restitution happening July 18, 337. Notwithstanding which, Theodoret,^q I know not by what computation, makes the time of his banishment to be two years and four months; and Rufinus,^r that it was six years before his return to Alexandria, but then heedlessly confounds it with an after-exile. But most prodigious is the account of Epiphanius, who, speaking of this affair, tells us,^s that he remained in the parts of Italy more than twelve or fourteen years. A mistake not capable of excuse any other way (and that too lame and unsatisfactory) than by saying, that he meant it of the several banishments which Athanasius underwent from first to last. But we have formerly remarked, that, of all others, he is the most loose and careless relater of these matters.

III. Furnished with this royal warrant, Athanasius puts himself upon his journey, passing through Syria, and so to Alexandria, welcome we may be sure to the people of his charge; all ranks and orders of men,^t high and low, in city and country, receiving him with all imaginable expressions of joy and gladness. All this the Arians beheld with an envious and evil eye, and not being able to prevent his coming back, were resolved to make it uneasy to him: to which end they endeavoured to spoil the triumphs of his return, by blowing up people into tumults and disorders, on purpose that hence they might have some pretext of improving it into a formal charge and accusation, which they

^p Vid. Idat. Fast. Consul. ad Ann. 376.

^q Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 1.

^r Lib. i. c. 18.

^s Adv. Melet. Hæres. lxxviii. c. 8.

^t Theodor. l. ii. c. 2.

did shortly after, by means of their potent friends above. For the Eusebian faction at this time ruled all in the court of Constantius, to whose share the Eastern part of the empire fell. First they gained Eusebius the eunuch,^u great chamberlain of the palace, to their side, and by him the rest of the eunuchs, men of greatest note and favour with the emperor. Next they recommended their opinions and the merit of their cause to the empress, and last of all prevailed with the emperor; who being a young prince, and of an easy and credulous temper, was without any difficulty brought over to them. And now the cause began to run smooth, and to be freely vented without control. The emperor's guards were able to tell you how the case stood between Athanasius and his adversaries: the eunuchs and court-ladies held chat, and confidently disputed the most profound points of faith; nay, scarce a corner in the city, where the meanest mechanic would not take upon him to argue *pro* or *con* in these weighty matters. And this licence soon spread itself into other parts; till from inquiring they fell to disputing, and that turned to wrangling, which ended at length in more fatal feuds and quarrels.

IV. Having thus successfully settled and secured their interests at court, they fall more directly upon Athanasius, whom they accuse to the emperor of all the crimes that had been charged upon him in the time of Constantine, with some few matters of later date, of equal truth and credit with the rest. And not content to assault him at home, they next attempt to ruin his reputation abroad, writing letters to that purpose to Constantine and Constans,^v the two other imperial brothers, wherein they set forth at large all the evils and mischiefs which they could with any pretence heap upon him, from his first entrance upon the see of Alexandria, enumerating those several absurd and foolish accusations that had been managed against him with so much heat in the synod of Tyre; to which they now add, that he had insolently taken upon him to return without leave; that having been synodically condemned, and thereupon banished by the emperor, he had resumed his place without any synodical sentence of absolution; that his return was so distasteful to the people, that it hurried all things into a general

^u Socrat. l. ii. c. 2. Sozom. l. iii. c. 1.

^v Epist. Synod. Alex. ap. Athan. c. Arian. s. 3. Vid. Theodor. l. ii. c. 3.

tumult and confusion, whence ensued blood and slaughter, charging him with things done by the governor of Alexandria before he returned thither; yea, that he himself had commanded some to be beaten, others to be brought to trial, and cast into prison; and that not Egypt only, but Palestine, Phœnicia, and the neighbour provinces were likely to be involved in the same storm and tempest. The same they writ to Julius bishop of Rome, desiring that he would ratify and confirm the sentence which the council of Tyre had given against him. The chief actors in this affair were Theognis bishop of Nice, Theodore of Heraclea, and (who acted all the rest) Eusebius, translated about this time from Nicomedia to the see of Constantinople, in the room of Paulus, now again ejected and banished by the prevalency of the Arian party.

V. Of all these transactions Athanasius had quick intelligence, and finding from what quarter the wind blew, thought it high time to provide against the storm which he saw coming upon him. To this end he first convened the bishops of Egypt, Thebais, Libya, and Pentapolis, who met in synod at Alexandria, to the number of near an hundred, unanimously agreeing to vindicate the innocency of their metropolitan, conceiving themselves most properly capable to give testimony in this case, as being nearest to the stage of action, and many of them eye-witnesses of the most material passages whereof Athanasius stood accused. Immediately therefore they write an encyclical epistle to all the bishops of the catholic church,^w wherein they complain of the fraud and malice of his enemies, solemnly declare against those scandals and calumnies which they had cast upon him, particularly refute the several misdemeanours, wherewith, in the late letters to the emperors and the bishop of Rome, he had been charged; concluding with an earnest importunity that they would receive this testimony, and stand up for the cause of Athanasius, and not give credit to the wicked and fraudulent suggestions of his adversaries, who boggled at no ways, how lewd soever, to advance their cause; but especially imposed upon them in the matter of subscriptions; the names of Egyptian bishops wherein they so much gloried, not being Catholics, but Meletian schismatics, who notoriously disturbed the peace of the church, and were guilty of worse things than

^w Ext. ap. Athan. ubi supra.

they were willing to commit to writing, an account whereof they might receive from those who should deliver their letter to them. Thus prepared, he forthwith despatched away messengers to the courts of the Western emperors,^x where meeting with those sent from the adverse party, they so baffled their reports, and plainly exposed the falsehood of their accusations, that they were forced to retire thence with shame. At Rome (whither they went also to carry the synodical epistle) they had frequent meetings,^y where they found, that before their arrival the Eusebian messengers had been pressing Julius to own what had been done in the synod at Tyre, desiring him, for his satisfaction in the truth of things, to write to one Pistus at Alexandria, who would give him a faithful relation of these matters: which they no sooner heard, but they acquainted Julius, that this Pistus was a professed Arian, and as such had been branded long since by Alexander their bishop, and by the synod of Nice; and that he had no other orders, than what he had received from Secundus of Pentapolis, whom that great council had rejected as an Arian bishop. And indeed, at all their meetings, they still managed their cause with so much clearness and uncontrollable evidence, that Julius and all indifferent persons were abundantly satisfied in their accounts of things; which put Martyrius, Macarius, and Hesyehius, the Eusebian legates, to such a plunge, that not well knowing what shift to make, they requested Julius, that a council might be called about this matter, and both parties concerned summoned to appear, that so the case might be debated and decided in a just and an impartial way, and that then they should be ready to make good whatever they had charged upon Athanasius. This, however, intended by them only as a present shift, yet seeming fair and reasonable, was assented to, and the Eusebian legates dismissed, or indeed rather they fled away by night, though sick and indisposed, not able to bear the shame of such frequent and public refutations; Julius resolving to give their masters notice of the time and place by messengers of his own. Hereof he presently advertised Athanasius, referring it to him to appoint the place of the synod, where he thought he might best appear and answer for himself with freedom and safety; sending him withal, a copy of the Acts of the synod of Tyre, and of those that had been drawn up

^x Athan. ad Monachos. s. 9.

^y Ibid. et Apol. c. Arian. s. 24.

in Maræotis, which the messengers of Eusebius had brought with them.² This good success of his was yet about this time, or soon after, a little allayed with the news of the death of his great lord and patron, Constantine the emperor, the eldest of the three brothers, who invading the dominions of his brother Constans, was himself killed in the attempt, Ann. Chr. 340.

VI. Things being thus transacted at Rome, Eusebius and the rest, who had espoused the defence of the Arian party against Athanasius, not knowing what would be the event of things, resolve to hold a synod in the East, which they knew well enough how to pack, or at least to influence to their advantage; and for this a convenient opportunity soon presented itself upon this occasion. Constantine the Great, some years before he died, had begun a very stately and magnificent church at Antioch,³ the oversight whereof he committed to his son Constantius, who, according to the design of so generous a piety, carried it on, after his father's death, to perfection, with all the advantages both of greatness and ornament which it was capable to receive, whence it was commonly called *DOMINICUM AUREUM*,^b or "the Golden Church." And being now finished, the bishops of the neighbouring provinces were, by the emperor's letters, summoned to the solemnity of its dedication; this being the pretence,^c while the design at the bottom was a synodical convention. There met at Antioch ninety odd bishops, Maximus bishop of Jerusalem not appearing with the rest; for being sensible how much he had been imposed upon by subtle artifices in the synod of Tyre, to subscribe to the deposing of Athanasius, he would not trust himself a second time, having done too much already to the prejudice of the catholic cause. Indeed Baronius, with great confidence, assures us,^d (and, which to me is strange, he is followed herein by a man of more learning than himself,^e) that of the whole number there were but thirty-six Arians, (which, being men of spirit and interest, overruled the whole assembly,) and that the rest were catholic bishops. But evident it is, that he was led into that error,^f by a gross mistake of a passage in the

² Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 83. Vid. etiam s. 28.

³ Euseb. de vit. Const. l. iii. c. 50.

^b Hieron. Supplem. ad Chron. Euseb. Ann. 329.

^c Socrat. l. ii. c. 8. Sozom. l. iii. c. 5.

^d Ad Ann. 341. num. 4, 5.

^e P. de Marc. de Concord. l. iii. c. 3. §. 2.

^f Ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 29.

letter of pope Julius, which being rightly understood as it is in the Greek, looks quite another way, as a learned man has demonstrated beyond all exception.^g Besides that, all of them, with one consent, expressly disowned themselves to be Arians, however otherwise partial and favourable to the cause. As for matters of doctrine, (that we may despatch this first, though transacted last,) they proceeded herein with great art and subtlety, doing nothing that might openly clash with the synod of Nice. And first they wrote a synodical epistle,^h (which they sent abroad to the bishops of the several churches,) wherein they drew up a brief account of their creed. The letter (at least so much of it as is now extant) runs thus: “ We are not the disciples of Arius. For how can we that are bishops be followers of him that was but a presbyter? Nor have we entertained any other faith, than that which has been published from the beginning. But being constituted judges for the trial and examination of his belief, we received him, rather than followed him, which you may understand from what follows. For from the beginning we have been taught to believe in one God, the maker and preserver of all things both intelligible and sensible; and in one only begotten Son of God, subsisting before all worlds, and abiding together with the Father that begat him; by whom all things were made, visible and invisible; who, according to the Father’s will, did in these last days come down from heaven, and took flesh of the blessed Virgin; and when in all things he had fulfilled his Father’s will, suffered, and rose again, and returned to heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the quick and the dead, and being King and God, abides so for ever. We believe also in the Holy Ghost. And, if it be necessary to add, we believe likewise the resurrection of the flesh, and the life everlasting.”

A confession plausibly drawn up, and so put together that each party might subscribe it, it consisting of propositions owned on all hands, but industriously omitting the word “ consubstantial,” which they ever rejected as foreign and unscriptural. But this being thought too short and unsatisfactory, and the sense of it obscure and ambiguous in the most important articles, they afterwards published a larger confession of their faith in

^g Vales. Observ. l. i. c. 8. ad calc. Sozom. p. 180.

^h Ext. ap. Athan. de Synod. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 22. et Socrat. l. ii. c. 10.

this form: ¹ “ According to the faith delivered by the evangelists and apostles, we believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker and Creator of all things; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, being God, his only begotten Son, by whom all things are made, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, whole of whole, alone of God alone, perfect of perfect, King of King, Lord of Lord, the living Word, true Wisdom, Life and Light, the way of Truth, the Resurrection, the Shepherd, the Door; unchangeable and inseparable, the most express and exact image of his Father’s godhead, substance, power, counsel, and glory; the first-born of every creature; he who in the beginning was with God, even God the Word, as it is said in the gospel, ‘ and the Word was God, by whom all things were made, and in whom all things subsist.’ Who in these last days came down from heaven, and was born of the Virgin Mary, according to the scriptures; and was made man, the Mediator between God and man, the Apostle of our faith, and the Prince of life, as himself says, ‘ I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;’ who suffered for us, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again with glory and power to judge the quick and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost, which is given for consolation, sanctification, and consummation to them that believe; even as our Lord Jesus Christ commanded his disciples, saying, ‘ Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,’ plainly intimating the Father as truly a Father, the Son as truly a Son, and the Holy Ghost as truly such: so as these are not mere simple names, but such as accurately express each one’s proper hypostasis, or person, order, and glory: so that they are three in person, but one in consent. Holding therefore this faith, which in the presence of God and Christ we have maintained from the first, and shall retain to the last, we, under an anathema, condemn all perverse heretical opinions. And if any one, contrary to the orthodox belief held forth in scripture, shall teach and affirm, that ‘ there was any time or age, before the Son was begotten,’ let him be accursed. And if any shall affirm ‘ the Son to be a creature, as one of the creatures;’ or a

¹ Ext. ap. Athan. de Synod. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 23. et Socrat. ubi supra.

branch, as one of the branches, and shall not hold all the things before mentioned, just as the holy scriptures have delivered them; or shall teach or preach any other thing than what we have received, let him be accursed. For we for our parts do truly and religiously believe and entertain all things delivered both by the prophets and apostles, and that are consigned to us in the holy scriptures."

In this form, also, they omit the word "consubstantial;" in all things else Sozomen thinks they agree with the decrees of the Nicene creed;^k but wisely adds, unless some secret meaning lurk under the words, which he was not aware of. And to gain the greater credit to this confession of faith, they gave it out that they found it written with Lucian the martyr's own hand; a man eminently versed in all sorts of learning, especially the holy scriptures, and who suffered under the Diocletian persecution at Nicomedia. After this, Theophronius bishop of Tyana, a man greatly revered by the synod, drew up another short confession, which was propounded and assented to;^l wherein I find no material difference from the former, concluding only with an explicit anathema against that man (or any that shall communicate with him) that shall teach, or privately maintain, any thing contrary to this faith, or that shall savour of Marcellus of Ancyra, Sabellius, or Paul of Samosata. Nor content with this, some months after the recess of the council, being re-assembled in another session, they drew up a fourth confession,^m though without any considerable alteration in the substance of it, concluding those, who affirm the Son of God to be *ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων*, of things not existing, or of any other substance (*ὑπόστασις*) than that of God, and that there was any time when he was not, to be separate from the catholic church. This they sent to the emperor Constans, then in France, despatching Narcissus bishop of Neronias, Maris of Chalcedon, Theodore of Heraclea, Marcus of Arethusa, members of their synod, to that purpose. It may seem strange, that in one council so many creeds should be drawn up: but besides that, they sat a long time, and so had leisure enough to review and refine their debates and determinations, possibly they might design a liberty to choose which they pleased, as the circumstances of after-times might make most

^k Lib. iii. c. 5.

^l Ap. Athan. de Synod. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 24.

^m Ext. *ibid.* s. 25.

convenient ; or, as Socrates thinks,ⁿ that by making way to introduce several forms, they might in time bring down things to downright Arianism. Next to matters of faith, they took notice of the external state and polity of the church, composing twenty-five canons concerning several cases of order and discipline, which have place in the body of the councils at this day, and which, whatever might be the particular occasions, or the designs of those that made them, are certainly excellent rules of church-policy, and wisely contrived to prevent those ordinary mal-administrations that are wont to invade the government of the church.

VII. But leaving these matters, come we to what was the subject of their first debates, and the prime design of the meeting, viz. the case of Athanasius. No sooner was the council sat, but heavy complaints were brought in, all the accusations being revived and dressed up, which either heretofore, or of late, had been made against him, which, we may be sure, wanted neither wit nor artifice to set them off. And the thing took accordingly, it being resolved on, that he should be deposed from his charge, and another substituted in his room. The place was first proffered to one Eusebius,^o born of a good family at Edessa, a man of extraordinary parts and learning both divine and human, and who had sometime been scholar to his namesake, the great bishop of Cæsarea ; but he wisely declined it : upon whose refusal, they pitched upon one Gregorius, an obscure person born in Cappadocia, whom, though a mere stranger, altogether unknown both to the clergy and the people over whom he was to preside, they did, and at that distance too, contrary to all the rules and customs of the church, consecrate bishop of Alexandria, (in which capacity he subscribed the decrees of the synod,) resolving to implore the imperial assistance, to give him possession of the place by force, and to suppress all opposition that might be made against it. The news hereof quickly flew to Alexandria, and alarmed Athanasius timely to withdraw, and get into shelter, before the tempest could arise ;^p who accordingly set sail for Rome, to vindicate himself in open synod, according to the summons which he had received from Julius to that purpose ; who

ⁿ Lib. ii. c. 10.

^o Socrat. l. ii. c. 9. Sozom. l. iii. c. 6.

^p Athan. ad Monachos. s. 11. Apol. ad imp. Const. s. 4. Apol. c. Arian. s. 20. Vid. Theodor. l. ii. c. 4.

sent also Elpidius and Philoxenus, presbyters, with a letter to Eusebius and his party, appointing time and place, where he required them as plaintiffs to appear, otherwise they must leave the world to judge, whether the cause they defended was not unsound, and unable to abide the test. The messengers arriving in the East, found Eusebius and the rest in the council at Antioch, where the letters being delivered, they were strangely surprised with the summons to a synod at Rome, a place where they knew very well they had neither interest nor authority, where they should have no great minister of state to govern the assembly, no military guard to keep the doors, no secular powers to abet their practices and execute their commands. This made them while off the matter with delays, detaining the messengers with expectation of an answer, till the time appointed for the synod was past; and then fairly excused themselves, pretending they durst not venture so long a journey, the wars with Persia then growing on; but indeed privately agreeing amongst themselves, that if they could not get the better by ecclesiastical sentence, they must betake themselves to their accustomed arts of force and power. At last the Roman presbyters are dismissed with letters to Rome, drawn up with all the exquisite arts of eloquence, but tart and invective; wherein (as appears from Julius's answer, and the sum of the letter itself set down by Sozomen⁹) they complained that they should be cited to Rome, there being other places more convenient; that they acknowledged the church of Rome to be very venerable, as having been the seat of the apostles, and from the first the metropolis of piety, yet that it was beholden to the East for those great men who had planted and propagated religion there; that the dignity of bishops was not to be measured by the greatness of cities, wherein if they were not equal, they were at least superior in virtue, in readiness, and resolution; that the time appointed for the synod was too short for so great an affair, and for persons at that distance; that he had taken upon him to examine the acts of the council of Tyre, which ought not again to be called in question; that he had reflected contempt upon them, writing only to Eusebius and some others, and taking no notice of all the rest; that he had in a manner prejudged the cause, by holding a friendly correspondence and communion with Athanasius

⁹ Lib. iii. c. 8. vid. Socrat. l. ii. c. 15.

and Marcellus, persons whom they had long since condemned, and deprived of ecclesiastical communion; in short, they offered to hold peace and communion with Julius, if he would ratify the deprivation of those whom they had deposed, and own the ordination of those whom they had substituted in their rooms; but if not, they refused to have any thing to do with him, putting him in mind, that their predecessors, the bishops of the East, never meddled with the affairs of the West, when the church of Rome had cast Novatian out of doors. As soon as the messengers were returned, the synod met at Rome,^r above fifty bishops assembling in the church of Vito the presbyter; where the letter from the council at Antioch being read, the cause of Athanasius was brought before them, who opened his case, and so cleared his reputation from the malicious imputations laid upon it, by the evidence of witnesses, and the refusal of his adversaries to make good the charge, that the synod declared themselves abundantly satisfied in the innocency of his cause, and decreed that he (and together with him Marcellus of Ancyra, who had been condemned at the same time with him by the conventicle at Constantinople in the time of Constantine) should be held acquitted of all accusations, and be admitted to the communion of the church. Hither also at this time came several bishops out of Thrace, Phœnicia, Palestine,^s and other parts, many presbyters from Alexandria and elsewhere, complaining of the merciless usage they and their churches met with, from the cruelty and insolence of the prevailing party in the East; and more had come out of Egypt and Alexandria, had not their adversaries detained them by force and violence: all which inspired the good bishops with a holy zeal and indignation, and they accordingly, before their dissolution, ordered Julius to write in the name of the synod to the Eastern bishops, in answer to the letter which they had sent; which he did in a prolix epistle,^t wherein he smartly checks their insolent and irregular proceedings, fully answers all their vain cavils and pretences, refutes their excuses for not coming to the synod, and gives them an account of their receiving Athanasius and Marcellus to communion. This letter he sent by count Gabian, before whose arrival in the East, Eusebius of Constantinople (the great spring

^r Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 20. Ad Monachos. s. 15.

^s Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 33.

^t Ext. *ibid.* s. 21, etc.

of motion in these actions) was dead, and the synod, probably, broken up, so that what became of it is uncertain. For though a learned man tells us, from the authority of Sozomen,^u that upon the arrival of this epistle, the Eastern bishops again assembled the next year, anno 343, in synod at Antioch, and wrote a sharp stinging answer, yet is it plain, and as clear as the sun, that this could be no other than the answer we mentioned before, sent by Elpidius and Philoxenus, and this himself grants elsewhere,^v blaming Sozomen for making this epistle to have been written not in the former, but in an after-synod at Antioch, but withal taking no notice of his own confident mistake.

VIII. But it is time we return to Alexandria, and see how things were carried there since Athanasius's retirement, where we shall find them bad enough. The bishops at Antioch having (as before was said) conferred the government of that church upon Gregory, the Cappadocian, and finding the stream in the West to run strong against them, were forced to call in the help of the secular arm, which they had ever found the most positive way of confutation, importuning Constantius^w to interpose his power for the support of their tottering cause, otherwise likely to tumble to the ground; that now, if ever, was the time for him to shew himself the patron of their cause, and the defender of their faith, and that to this purpose he would cause Gregory to be forthwith seated in the chair of Alexandria. And that the work might be done effectually, they procure Philagrius to be again made governor of Egypt. He had some years since discharged that place of eminency, at what time he had done them considerable service against Athanasius, when the commissioners came from the synod at Tyre to examine the case of Ischyras in the province of Maræotis: a man every way fitted for their turn: he was Gregory's own countryman; in his nature fierce and cruel; for his religion, a Pagan idolater; and, which was worse, an apostate from the Christian faith. With him and Arsacius the eunuch, attended with a strong military guard, and furnished likewise with the emperor's letters, Gregory sets forward for Alexandria, where they no sooner arrived, but they endeavoured to strengthen themselves, by joining to their party all the most rude and profligate rabble about the city, men of mean con-

^u Annot. in Socrat. l. ii. c. 15.

^v Annot. in Sozom. l. iii. c. 8.

^w Athan. ad Monachos, s. 9.

ditions, and desperate fortunes; who arming themselves with clubs and swords, broke into the church dedicated to Quirinus, (where great numbers of Catholics were assembled,) killing some and trampling others under foot, others were first beaten and wounded, and then banished;* no order, sex, or age escaped their savage hands; they offered violence to presbyters, and those who had more immediately devoted themselves to the service of religion, abused virgins beyond all bounds of modesty, dragged matrons before public judicatures, treating them with the highest instances of rudeness and incivility; nay, so far did they persecute the aunt of Athanasius, (if we may so understand his *τὴν τοῦ ἐπισκόπου θείαν*, of some bishop however,) that their malice reached beyond her life, not permitting her, when dead, to have the conveniency of a grave, which she had wanted, had not those who undertook to bury her carried her out, as if it had been their own relation. Some men's estates were seized, others had their food and provisions taken from them; nay, the holy sacrament itself was profaned by Pagans, and scornfully thrown to the ground. The bishops were spoiled, beaten, imprisoned or banished, and used without any reverence either to their age or order; and amongst the rest, Sarapammon, an ancient confessor, after all other hardships, was sent into banishment; and Potamo the aged bishop of Heraclea, who had suffered imprisonment, and lost an eye for his constancy to the truth under the Diocletian persecution, was now so miserably scourged and beaten, that they gave not over till they left him for dead; and though, by the means that were used, he after some time recovered life, yet he died shortly after of his wounds and pains, carrying to his grave the honour of a second martyrdom.

IX. These bloody and violent proceedings, so distasteful to all peaceable and sober minds, Gregory knew well could not hold long, unless strongly backed by the civil power. Accordingly he set himself, by all plausible insinuations, to court the favour of those in authority, without any regard to persons of his own rank and order. If a letter came from a great man, the messenger should be caressed and dismissed with a reward; if from a clergyman, it should be scorned and slighted. Amongst others whom he obliged to his side, was Balacius, general of the Egyptian forces, who espoused and pursued his cause with a furious

* Vid. etiam Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 30.

zeal; and sitting with him upon the bench of justice, would command the bishops, and sometimes the professors of monastic life, to be brought, and to be unmercifully beaten and whipped before them; Gregory, after all, persuading and inviting them to join in communion with him. But the divine vengeance soon after overtook this potent assessor. For nothing mollified by the letters and warnings given him by St. Anthony, the great father of the heremital institution, (venerable in those times for the incomparable strictness and austerity of his life in the Egyptian solitudes,) he still went on, till riding out one day, to the first stage from Alexandria, his horse threw back his head, and catching him by the thigh, tore off the flesh, withal casting him to the ground, so bruised and wounded, that being carried back into the city, within three days he ended his miserable life. Gregory, though thus busily employed at home, was not yet altogether unmindful of his credit and interest abroad; for knowing how many, both bishops and presbyters, were fled to Rome, where they were likely to make a tragical representation of affairs, he despatched away Carpones,^y a presbyter, (one that had been convicted long since by Alexander of too much familiarity and correspondence with Arius,) as his legate to Rome, (where the synod then sat about the case of Athanasius,) to mollify reports, and beget a favourable construction of what had passed at Alexandria. But the man was rejected, neither he nor his message finding entertainment.

X. We left Athanasius in the synod at Rome, purging himself, whereupon he was absolved by the council of the crimes charged upon him. Indeed he made that city the main seat of his exile, having been there a year and an half already; and continuing some years longer, kindly received and entertained by all. We cannot imagine that so good a man, and one of so active a genius, would lie idle so long a time, though how he spent his time there is unknown to us. Baronius,^z in the general, finds him this employment, (though without any other authority than his own conjecture,) diligently and solemnly to visit and adore the shrines and memories of the martyrs, the *cryptæ* and the *cœmeteria*, those venerable subterranean monuments, especially those of St. Peter and Paul, expressing a more peculiar devotion towards St. Peter, for having sent thence his

^y Ibid. s. 24.

^z Ad Ann. 342. num. 42.

disciple St. Mark to plant and propagate Christianity in Egypt. All which we are bound in good manners to believe, though not one syllable of any warrant is produced to make it good. More particularly he tells us,^a that he first introduced into Rome the monastic discipline of Egypt, publishing to that end the Life of Anthony the Great, then living; and that this institution was embraced, not only by others, but also by the noble matrons of Rome. Though St. Jerome (upon whose authority he builds all this) says no more,^b than that Marcella, a Roman lady, had from Athanasius and his successor Peter (who fled thither in the time of the Arian persecution) received an account of the life of Anthony, and of the discipline of the monasteries of Pachomius, and of the virgins and widows that were in the country of Thebais; but was followed herein by none for many years after, till Sophronia revived the institution. But (what is most considerable) now it was (they tell us^c) that Athanasius composed the famous creed, that commonly passes under his name; that being cited to Rome, and charged as criminal, he could not expect a favourable reception without giving an account of his faith; that therefore he drew up in Latin this confession, which he repeated before Julius and the rest, which being approved, was, together with the acts of the synod, laid up amongst the archives of the church of Rome, whence it was published many ages after. This is pretended for its birth and pedigree, which being said without any shadow of proof, may with the same reason be rejected. Indeed, so far is it from being probable that he made it at this time at Rome, that no evidence appears that he ever made it all. For not to insist upon other arguments, there is this unanswerable prejudice lies against it, that Athanasius himself (who is very punctual in setting down all the material passages of his life that concern these matters) does not so much as once, in all his writings, give the least intimation of it; nor is it mentioned by any historian or writer of that or the following times; no, not by the writers of his life, that lived in the middle ages of the church. Nor, indeed, was it ever heard of in the world, till about six hundred years after Athanasius was dead; but mentioned then, and not urged with any confidence, till above two hundred years after that, when the

^a Ad Ann. 340. num. 7.

^b Epist. xcvi. ad Princip. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 780.

^c Baron. ad Ann. 340. num. 11. et seq.

legates of pope Gregory the Ninth produced and pleaded it at Constantinople, in their disputations with the Greeks. And can it be imagined, that so famous a confession, made by a person for whom the world had so just a reverence, whose writings were so highly valued, and so diligently sought after in all parts of the world, should lie incognito for so many ages, when it might have been of so much use and importance to the church, to have ended several controversies then on foot, especially being pretended to lie no further out of reach, than the records of the Roman church, which there was daily occasion of searching, and to which there was frequent resort from all parts? But by whomsoever compiled, having entitled itself to so great a name, and bearing so express an image of his doctrine, so stoutly maintained by him both by writing and suffering, and being vouched and asserted by the supereminent authority of the church of Rome, it soon gained credit and reputation amongst all the churches of the West.

XI. But whether or no Athanasius was busied in the drawing up a confession of his faith at Rome, it is certain his adversaries were hammering one in the East. About four years since, they had composed several forms in the council of Antioch, where they now again met in synod, more accurately to examine, and fully to declare their sense concerning the controversies that at this time so much distracted and disturbed the church. And in pursuance of this, they made *πίστιν διὰ πολλῶν γραφείσαν* (as Athanasius tells us^d) a very long explication of their faith, thence commonly called *μακρόστικος*, or “the large confession,” drawn up (as one truly observes^e) with great learning and elegancy; wherein having first set down the symbol made in their last session at Antioch, they add a prolix explication of the principal articles, with a particular antithesis to the errors and heresies of Paulus Samosatenus, Marcellus, Photinus, Sabellius, the Patropassians, and some others. It will be too tedious to set down the whole, it will be enough to remark some few of the things which they declare concerning the person of the Son of God. They assert, that he was not begotten of any pre-existent substance (*ὑπόστασις*) besides the Father, but was truly begotten of God only, and that *ἀχρόνως*, without time,

^d De Synod. Arim. et Seleuc. s. 26. ubi ext. et apud Socrat. l. ii. c. 19.

^e Vales. Annot. in Socrat. p. 24.

and before all ages, and this ἀνεφίκτως καὶ πᾶσιν ἀκαταλήπτως, by a most unfathomable and incomprehensible way of generation; that although he be subject to God the Father, yet notwithstanding before all times was he begotten of God, and in his nature is true and perfect God, being not of man afterwards made God, but of God for our sakes made man, yet without ever ceasing to be God; that they did abominate and anathematize the followers of Marcellus and Photinus, who under a pretence of asserting a divine monarchy, did, in conformity with the Jews, deny Christ's eternal essence and godhead, and his endless and immortal kingdom; that they acknowledged him to be the living and self-subsisting Word, the substantial Word of the Father, and God of God, being perfectly joined together, without any medium, or distance, or separation from each other. In conclusion they add, that they were forced thus largely to express themselves about these matters, not out of any vanity or affectation, but to remove all sinister suspicions of heterodoxy, with those that were unacquainted with their case, and that the Western bishops might understand the groundless calumnies of their adversaries; and their catholic sentiments appear to all uncorrupt and unbiassed persons to be consonant to, and founded in the holy scriptures.

XII. This account of their faith they gave to Eudoxius,^f bishop of Germanicia, Macedonius of Mopsuestia, Martyrius and Demophilus, to be carried into the West; where, when they arrived, they found a very convenient opportunity to deliver it. For very many of the Western prelates were about this time assembled in a synod at Milan, (where the emperor Constans kept his court,) to advise about the case of Athanasius, and to petition the emperor to interpose his authority to compose the distracted affairs of the church. The messengers arriving, presented their confession to the synod, desiring their concurrence in it. But they either not sufficiently understanding the criticisms of the Greek language, (as Socrates thinks,^g) or, more probably, judging some heretical poison to be couched under those specious expressions, refused to accept it; saying, they were content with the Nicene creed, and would admit no more, and that it was but reasonable that they who brought the con-

^f Socrat. l. ii. c. 19. Vid. Liber. Epist. ad Const. ap. Hilar. in fragm. v. s. 4.

^g Lib. ii. c. 20.

fession, should first explicitly condemn the Arian doctrine. This the eastern legates highly resented, and finding there was little hope to prevail, departed the synod in great passion and discontent. At this convention also Photinus,^h bishop of Sir-mium, (who had sometime been scholar and deacon to Marcellus of Ancyra,) was condemned for some heretical propositions he had lately started, affirming our Saviour to be only a mere man, endeavouring to revive the long-since branded heresy of Paul of Samosata. And now it was, too, that Ursacius and Valens, two great sticklers against Athanasius, presenting the assembly with a book, wherein they expressly condemned the Arian and Photinian heresies, were absolved, and taken into the communion of the church. Towards the conclusion of this synod (as is most probable) Athanasius came to Milan, summoned thither by the emperor's mandate, by whom he was frequently admitted into his presence, and treated with great kindness and humanity.ⁱ And though (as became a prudent man under his circumstances) he carried himself with all imaginable caution, never going alone into the emperor's presence, but always accompanied with a great train of bishops and others, yet could he not escape the lash of malice and envy; his adversaries hence taking occasion to traduce him to Constantius, suggesting that he had done ill offices between him and his brother Constantius, possessing him with prejudices, and endeavouring to stir him up against him. Whereof, and of some other crimes, he very clearly purges himself in his Apology to Constantius.

SECTION VII.

THE ACTS OF THE SYNOD AT SARDICA.

A synod convened at Sardica, when. What number of bishops in it. No British bishops there. The Eastern prelates refuse to join with them of the West, and why. They transact synodically in separate assemblies. Publicly challenged by Athanasius and his party. The reasons of their refusal to proceed to a fair and open trial. Their trifling proposal to gain time rejected. The pretence of their being recalled by Constantius. Their deposing Athanasius and the principal of his party. Baronius offended with their sentencing pope Julius. Their confession of faith. Their circular epistle in the name of the Sardican synod. All this transacted at Sardica, not (as commonly believed) at Philippopolis. The proceedings of the true Sardican council. No confession or explication of faith made in this synod. Athanasius, Marcellus, and

^h Hilar. in fragm. ii. s. 19.

ⁱ Vid. Apol. ad Const. s. 4.

Asclepas, particularly absolved and restored. The mischiefs done by the Arians to the Catholics examined. The chiefs of the Arian faction sentenced and deposed. Their synodical epistles, and letters to the emperors.

THE good emperor Constans, at the instance and solicitation of Athanasius and the Western bishops, had often and earnestly dealt with his brother Constantius, that the Nicene faith might be established, and the exiled bishops restored, and so a period put to the church's troubles, who now at length consented that the matter should be referred to the decision of a general council, which was accordingly called by the imperial letters, Ann. Chr. 347, not long after that at Milan; for that it was after that convention, is evident, as from other circumstances, so especially from what Athanasius himself tells us,^k that at his being at Milan, Constans assured him, that he had written to his brother, that a synod might be held about this matter. The place appointed for the council was Sardica, an eminent city of Illyricum, (perhaps an ancient colony from Sardis in the Lesser Asia, and upon that account so oft in Athanasius styled *ἡ Σέρδων πόλις*, the city of the Sardiens,) a place conveniently situate in the confines of the Eastern and the Western empire, and in that regard equally fit for both. Hither out of both empires met to the number of about one hundred and seventy prelates, as Athanasius expressly tells us.^l Socrates,^m indeed, and those who follow his account, affirm, that there were no less than three hundred bishops out of the West only, and for this cite the testimony of Athanasius. But the mistake is gross and palpable; for Athanasius in that place says,ⁿ not that so many met at Sardica, (though his translator indeed makes him say so,) but that his cause had been adjudged and ratified by so many, partly in that synod, partly by the suffrages of those who both before and after it had subscribed in his behalf, the whole number amounting to about three hundred and forty-four. Amongst which we find mention of the bishops of Britain, whence it is generally taken for granted, not only by common writers, but even by those who see farther than ordinary into such matters,^o

^k Ad Monachos. s. 15.

^l Ibid.

^m Lib. ii. c. 20. Sozom. l. iii. c. 12. Vit. Pauli ap. Phot. Cod. 257. Vit. Athan. ibid. aliique plurimi.

ⁿ Apol. c. Arian. s. 1. et s. 50.

^o Usher. de prim. Eccl. Brit. c. 8. Seld. in Eutyech. p. 123. Burt. Comm. in Anton. p. 86.

that our British bishops were present at this council; when yet the most that can be inferred from that place is, that they only ratified and subscribed what the synod determined in the cause of Athanasius, the synod sending their decision into several provinces for the approbation of those who could not be present at the council. And indeed in the title of the synodical epistle, (as it is extant in Athanasius,^p but more entirely in Theodoret,^q) where all the provinces are reckoned up from whence they came, no mention is made of Britain: which I have therefore noted, not being willing that the honour of our country should be built upon uncertainties and mistakes. So that the number of the bishops must be reduced to almost one half, not above seventy-six coming out of the East, and out of above thirty-five provinces of the West (for out of so many, Athanasius tells us,^r this synod was collected) not full an hundred, who yet could not agree when they came together.

II. For the Eastern bishops arriving at Sardica, kept themselves in a separate assembly, refusing to join with the bishops of the West,^s and though there were some amongst them, men orthodox in their judgments, and of peaceable tempers, yet were they so influenced by the major part, either by promises or threatenings, that they durst not stir from them, two only excepted, Arius, a Palestine bishop, and Asterius, bishop of Arabia, who got away by stealth, and came over to the catholic party. The truth is, they found a quite other face of things than what they looked for: they came with a confident persuasion that Athanasius durst not appear, and abide a trial, and were strangely surprised, not only to find him here, but that he was prepared, and openly challenged them to a trial; they perceived that things would be managed here according to the strict rules of ecclesiastic discipline, that no force could be put upon the synod, no guards set at the doors, no great men of their party admitted from court, who might awe and direct proceedings; the usual arts by which they had hitherto prevailed, and for which end they had now brought with them count Musonianus, and Hesychius an officer of the imperial palace, by whose authority and influence they doubted not but they should be able to carry the day; they were amazed to see so many there

^p Apol. c. Arian. s. 50.

^q Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 8.

^r Ad Monachos. s. 17.

^s Athan. c. Arian. s. 35. Epist. Syn. Sard. *ibid.* s. 37, etc. Epist. ad Monachos. s. 15.

whom they had deposed and banished, and treated with all kinds of barbarous inhumanity, some having brought along with them the chains and instruments of cruelty wherewith they had been tortured, others shewing the wounds and the scars which they had received. The friends and kindred of those whom they had put to death, appeared to exhibit their complaints, and messengers came in the name of whole churches to represent the injuries and sufferings which they had undergone from the rage of the Arian party. Nor did it a little sensibly touch them, that Arius and Asterius were gone over to the synod, who had come along with them, and were privy to their most intimate councils and transactions. These things prophesied to them no good success; they saw it was to no purpose to let their cause come to a fair open trial; that Athanasius had all acts ready that concerned his case, which would sufficiently blast and expose their cause, and that they had no potent friends in the synod to support it: that therefore it was most advisable to break up and be gone, to prevent their being condemned upon the place; that if they departed, they should find one means or another to propagate and uphold their cause; and if the synod should condemn them after their departure, they had a sure friend of the emperor, who, they doubted not, would protect and assist them.

III. Hereupon they shut themselves up in the palace, where they were lodged, and where they daily held their consults. They were several times cited by the synod to appear, and that with smart provocations: if they came with a design to try the merits of the cause, why did they decline it? Either they should not have come at all, or being come, they could not, without just disparagement to their cause, refuse it. Athanasius and his brethren, whom they had so heavily charged, were there present; if they had any thing to object against them, they were required to do it; if they had not, the synod must proceed against them as false and unjust accusers. Athanasius also, together with Marcellus and Asclepas his fellow-sufferers, publicly challenged them to it, assuring the synod they would not only refute their slanders and calumnies, but make it fully appear what mischiefs and miseries they had brought upon their several churches. Protogenes, bishop of Sardica, and Hosius, the aged confessor and venerable bishop of Corduba, and now president

of the council, addressed themselves to them in a more private way, endeavouring by all fair means to persuade them, Hosius promising them a most candid and impartial hearing;^t or if they would not have the matter canvassed in open synod, that they would at least make him judge and umpire in the case, engaging, that if Athanasius was proved guilty of the crimes charged upon him, they would universally reject him; nay, although he should be found innocent, and they false accusers, if, notwithstanding all this, they should persist in their dislike of him, he would, to avoid offence, persuade him to go along with him into Spain; to which Athanasius, who stood by, gave his assent: an offer so infinitely reasonable, and fair beyond all expectation, that nothing but obstinacy and a bad cause could have the face to refuse it. However, they resolved not to appear upon any terms, nor submit to a sentence which they had too much reason to suspect would go full against them.

IV. But that they might give some colour to their non-conformity, they pretended, in the first place,^u that Athanasius and his accomplices had been heretofore convicted of notorious crimes, and accordingly condemned and deposed by several councils, and that they could not join with the synod, till they were banished thence, and denied communion; otherwise they should trample under foot the laws of the church, rescind and violate the sentence of God. But the synod was satisfied in this matter, their cause having been more than once maturely debated, and their innocency adjudged in councils called for that purpose, and themselves absolved, and received to communion, by almost all the bishops of the West. Next they pleaded that vast numbers of persons, guilty of the most enormous villanies, of blood and murders, of rapine and violence, of sacrilege and impiety, and what not? both against God and man, had at this time flocked hither from Constantinople and Alexandria, and were entertained and encouraged, advanced and respected by the synod, with whom they could not communicate without manifest impiety and profanation. And whereas Athanasius's innocency was so much insisted on, they made this offer, that a select number of each party might be sent into Egypt, to the places

^t Epist. ad Const. ap. Athan. ad Monachos. s. 44.

^u Epist. Oriental. ap. Hilar. in fragm. iii. s. 19.

where the crimes charged upon him had been committed, and might be bound, under the obligation of an oath, to take a faithful account of things; that if the charge proved false, they were ready to submit to censure, promising never to exhibit any complaints, either to the emperors, or to any synod or bishop; but if true, that the other party should silently acquiesce in what had been already done. This proposal was made by those five commissioners, who had been, many years since, deputed by the council of Tyre to go into Maræotis, to examine and report the state of things; and they now renewed the same motion, probably, either to gain time, not knowing but some emergent accident might intervene, or because they knew they should be able there successfully to manage the cause to their own advantage, as they had already done heretofore. But the synod rejected the motion, having already by them authentic copies of all those acts and records,^v and witnesses to attest the truth of things.^w Being thus beaten out of all other refuges, they fell upon one more absurd and weak than all the rest, pretending that they had received letters from the emperor concerning his triumphant victories against the Persians,^x and that there was a necessity of their departure to assist at those solemnities. This they intimated to the synod by Eustathius, presbyter of the church of Sardica, to whom Hosius, in the name of the rest, sent back this short peremptory message, that either they should stand to, and make good the charge which they had exhibited, and answer that which others had given in against them, or they might assure themselves, that the synod would take the matter *pro confesso*, and proceed against them as criminals, and acquit Athanasius and his party: a message which served only to quicken their departure thence.

V. Some time it was that they had now stayed at Sardica, which we cannot suppose they spent merely in wrangling and contention. No, they held frequent assemblies, and, though in a private and clandestine way, kept up the formalities of a synod. They plainly saw what measure they were like to expect from the council, and therefore resolved not to be behind-hand with them. Hereupon they synodically proceeded against the heads of the party, condemning and deposing not only Athanasius, Marcellus,

^v Epist. Syn. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 45. et ad Monachos. s. 15.

^w Hilar. in fragm. ii. s. 16.

^x Athan. ad Monachos, s. 16.

Asclepas, and Paulus of Constantinople,^y as the prime criminals, but as accessories by communicating with them, Hosius bishop of Corduba, president of the council, Maximinus of Triers, Protogenes of Sardica, Gaudentius of Naissus, and especially Julius bishop of Rome, whom they style “the prince and captain of all the mischief, he who had first set open the door to communion with wicked and excommunicate persons, and had made way for others to violate the laws of the church.” At this Baronius is out of all patience.^z What ! excommunicate the head of the church ? Depose the prince of the apostolic see ? A piece of insolence, he tells us, never before attempted in any age by the most execrable heresy. But the privilege of the infallible chair was not, it seems, then understood, nor these bold men frightened with the noise of “Thou art Peter.” Next they drew up a confession of faith, wherein they particularly condemn some of the Arian propositions ; a confession wherein the most critical of the Catholics found nothing to complain of, but that the word “consubstantial” was left out ; and accordingly it was owned by St. Hilary,^a and is expounded by him into a very orthodox sense. This done, they wrote a very prolix encyclical epistle,^b which they published in the name of the Sardican synod, wherein they give an account of what they had done, and of the bishops whom they had deposed, whom they expose with all contempt imaginable, and load with the bitterest reflections they could heap upon them ; charging the governors of the church, as they valued peace, order, and ecclesiastic discipline, to abstain from all communion with them, either by word or writing, not to send letters to them, or receive any from them, or so much as have to do with any that did communicate with them, subjoining to the epistle the confession of their faith. This decretal letter they despatched abroad to the bishops of several countries, and amongst the rest to Donatus, the head of that schismatical faction at Carthage, hoping that the Donatists, who stood at such open defiance to the Catholics, might by this means be brought over to their party. And indeed we find the Donatists glorying in their communion with the Eastern bishops, and insisting upon this epistle of the Sardican synod (for as such it passed) as the evidence of it ; and the truth is, it seems, that

^y Sozom. l. iii. c. 11.

^z Ad Ann. 347. num. 70.

^a De Syn. s. 35—37.

^b Ext. ap. Hilar. in fragm. iii. s. 1, etc.

for some time after, no other Sardican synod was known in Africa, but this clancular convention, which may seem the stranger, in that Gratus bishop of Carthage was at this time a member of the council.

VI. That all this was done by the Eastern prelates, during their stay at Sardica, I am strongly tempted to believe. I know the report passes current, uncontradicted, that I know of, by any writer, that in their return from Sardica they stayed at Philippopolis, a city of Thrace, where they held a synod, and passed the things we have but now mentioned, which, that they might be swallowed more unsuspected, they gilded over with the specious title of the Sardican synod. Now though I love not needlessly to swim against the stream, yet I must profess I see no reason to fix the scene at Philippopolis. It is founded upon the single authority of Socrates,^c not mentioned by any writer (that I know of) after him, ancients than the two trifling anonymous authors in Photius, who write with little certainty, and less judgment. Sure I am, it is not so much as once hinted by Athanasius, than whom none more exact in setting down these affairs, nor in any of the letters which the synod wrote, wherein they give a most particular account of things; it being equally improbable that they should not know it, and if known, that they should omit it. Besides, the Eastern bishops do not only in the front of their epistle affirm, that they celebrated their council in the city of Sardica, but in the body of it expressly say, that they did *de Sardica scribere*,^d write the account they there give from Sardica. And with what confidence can we imagine men of common prudence should in a public epistle tell the world, that these things were done at Sardica, had it been notoriously known (as it must be, had it been so) that they were despatched at a place an hundred miles distant from it? That which perhaps led Socrates into the mistake, was this. The Eastern bishops, in their journey to Sardica,^e held many little synods of their own party by the way in several places, (and no doubt at Philippopolis amongst the rest,) where it was agreed amongst them, (and those who seemed backward were threatened into compliance,) that when they came thither they should peremptorily refuse to concur with the synod, or to

^c Lib. ii. c. 20.

^d Ap. Hilar. fragm. iii. s. 23.

^e Epist. Syn. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 48.

put the affair to the issue of a trial, but that having appeared for fashion sake, should break up and depart. And thus indeed Sozomen plainly reports it,^f that before they came to Sardica, meeting first at Philippopolis, they thence wrote to the Western bishops at Sardica, to let them know, that unless they dismissed Athanasius and his party, and abstained from their communion, as persons already sentenced and deposed, they would in no wise join with them: and they were as good as their word, when they arrived at Sardica; where after several transactions to no purpose, but rather to the exasperating of each into a wider distance, they met (as he tells us) in separate assemblies, and made decrees contrary to each other; and then immediately subjoins what they did in the deposing of the bishops we mentioned, and in the explication of their faith, and the circular epistle which they wrote upon it; which is a just representation of things in their due place and order: all which Socrates not carefully attending to, confounds what was done at Sardica with what passed before at Philippopolis, making that the scene of their synodical transactions, which had been only the seat of their preparatory councils. Nor is it the only instance wherein he mistakes, not only in other cases, but in this very affair of the Sardican council, as, were it worth the while, I could evidently make appear.

VII. Having thus despatched the affair of the Oriental prelates, let us look next to what the fathers in the mean while did at Sardica. Three things, they tell us,^g there were that lay before them, and which the emperors by their letters had left to them to be freely discussed and ventilated in the council, the soundness of the faith, the case of the persons accused and condemned, and an inquiry into the great evils and mischiefs which the Arian party were reported to have committed in every place. As to the first, however matters of faith might be debated in the synod, it is certain they made no synodical determination in that matter. Indeed to the decretal epistle of the council, as it is extant in Theodoret,^h there is an appendix, containing a large account and explication of their faith. And it was, it seems, an early addition; for Athanasius himself takes notice of it,ⁱ and cautions against it, and withal assures us, that

^f Lib. iii. c. 11.

^g Epist. Syn. ad Jul. Pap. ap. Hilar. fragm. ii. s. 11.

^h Lib. ii. c. 8.

ⁱ Epist. ad Antioch. s. 5.

the council defined no such matter. He says, indeed, that some men were very hot that a supplement might be made to the faith agreed on in the council of Nice, but that the synod vehemently rejected the motion, and decreed that nothing should be further added to the faith, declaring that they fully acquiesced in the Nicene creed, as pious and orthodox, and complete enough, and that no other form should be admitted, lest the Nicene faith should be thought imperfect and insufficient, and a way laid open for men of wanton and petulant wits to attempt new creeds, as oft as humour or interest should incline them. Accordingly, in all ancient copies, both in Athanasius and St. Hilary, this additional appendage is left out, and it argued either insincerity, or at least great carelessness in Theodoret to insert it. It is mentioned also by Sozomen,^k who seems to make Hosius and Protogenes the principal contrivers of it, and that they were forced to write to Julius bishop of Rome to excuse it; that they did not thereby intend to derogate from the Nicene faith, but only more clearly to explain it, lest the Arians, making an ill use of that short *compendium*, should impose upon the unwary and the unskilful, by putting what sense they pleased upon it.

VIII. The persons accused, and who were now present, that their cause might be heard and canvassed in the synod, were Athanasius of Alexandria, Marcellus of Ancyra, and Asclepas of Gaza, who petitioned the synod that their accusers might be summoned to appear; which the accusers obstinately refusing, (though particularly challenged to it by the defendants more than once,) the fathers proceeded to take cognizance of their several cases. And first for Athanasius,^l they caused all the acts and proceedings of the synod of Tyre, and the informations that had been taken in Maræotis, to be produced and read, and every particular to be thoroughly scanned, and the witnesses that were brought out of Egypt to be examined, and having accurately debated the whole matter, and found it from first to last nothing but a train of malice and villany; and being confirmed in it by the notorious tergiversation of the adverse party, who durst not abide the trial, or make good the charge they had exhibited, they pronounced him innocent of the crimes where-with he had been defamed, restored him to his see, and with all the demonstrations of love and kindness, of respect and honour,

^k Lib. iii. c. 12.

^l Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 46. ad Monachos. s. 16.

embraced and entertained him. Next came on the cause of Marcellus, bishop of Ancyra. He had been long since sentenced and deposed by the Eusebian faction in the conventicle at Constantinople, for some un-orthodox assertions in his writings, tending to the heresy of Paul of Samosata. These he now explained,^m and shewed that his adversaries had maliciously perverted and misrepresented his meaning, urging those as dogmatical assertions, which he had only problematically handled by way of question. The synod approved his declaration, and accordingly absolved and restored him. But though by his subtlety and dissimulation he made shift a long time to blind the eyes of the catholic party, yet his Sabellian tenets were discovered afterwards, which that he took not up after his synodical absolution, but had all along craftily concealed them, is plain; however, my author assures us,ⁿ that Athanasius perceiving it, suspended him from communion. Together with him, the council acquitted Asclepas bishop of Gaza: he making it appear by the Acts of the synod of Antioch, (which he then produced,) that even then, when his accusers were there present to manage the cause against him, he had been absolved by the sentence of that synod.

IX. Next they proceeded to inquire into the carriage of the other party, and the intolerable mischiefs and injuries which they had done to the catholic bishops and churches. And here they met with nothing but blood and smoke, and a sad face of things: the good fathers were entertained with dismal and tragical stories of some that had been threatened,^o others condemned upon false and suborned accusations; some beaten, others wounded, and some directly murdered; many loaded and almost strangled with iron chains; more imprisoned, some whereof were stifled with the noisomeness of the prison; multitudes banished, and that into the most miserable and uncomfortable places, where hunger and nakedness would not fail to despatch them; churches had been set on fire, devout virgins stripped and rifled, and the common gaols filled with men of the holy order: and this for no other reason, but because they refused to enter into the Arian communion. All which was ready to be attested, partly by the confessors themselves then present in

^m Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 47.

ⁿ Sever. Sulp. l. ii. c. 37.

^o Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 45. Ep. Syn. ad Jul. ap. Hilar. fragm. ii. s. 11.

the council, partly by deputies sent by those that were absent; whole churches having sent commissioners to represent their complaints and grievances to the synod. Upon consideration of the whole affair, it was concluded, that they should proceed against the prime heads of the faction, those who had been chief authors and instruments of so many evils and mischiefs to the Christian world; and thereupon condemned and deposed Basil bishop of Ancyra,^p Quintianus of Gaza, Theodorus of Heraclea, Narcissus of Hierapolis, Acacius of Cæsarea, Stephen of Antioch, Ursacius of Singidunum, Valens of Mursa, Menophantus of Ephesus, George of Laodicea, banishing them from the communion of the faithful; it being but fit (say they) that they who separate the Son from the Father, should themselves be separated from the catholic church; but especially in passing sentence against Gregory the Arian intruder at Alexandria, they shewed a particular detestation, pronouncing him not only to have been no bishop, but not worthy the name of a Christian; nulling all ordinations made by him, and forbidding any to bear that character that had received orders from him. This done, they wrote to the clergy and the church of Alexandria,^q to receive Athanasius as their lawful bishop, whom they had found, and adjudged innocent of the things charged upon him; warning all those who had any ways communicated with Gregory and his party, to repent and withdraw, and return to the communion of the catholic church. They wrote also to Julius of Rome,^r desiring him to impart what had been transacted in the council to the bishops of Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia, lest being imposed upon by the adverse party, they might receive communicatory letters from them. Besides this, they drew up (as is usual in such cases) a *circulare* or general epistle to all the bishops of the catholic church,^s giving them a particular account of what had passed from the first meeting of the council, desiring them to look upon the persons they had condemned as under a just anathema, and to have no manner of communion with them; and that they would ratify the sentence and judgment of the synod, by adding their own suffrage and subscription to it:

^p Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 48. et ad Monachos. s. 17.

^q Ext. Epist. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 37, etc.

^r Ext. ap. Hilar. fragm. ii. s. 9, etc.

^s Ext. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 44. et ap. alios passim.

which was accordingly done, the synodical determination being subscribed by at least three hundred and forty-four bishops. Lastly, having formed and agreed upon twenty-one canons concerning the rites and good government and discipline of ecclesiastic matters, and concluded upon an address with letters to the emperors, to be sent by some of their own body, the council broke up, and the fathers returned home to their several sees.

SECTION VIII.

HIS ACTS FROM THE TIME OF THE SARDICAN COUNCIL TILL THE DEATH OF POPE JULIUS.

Constans's smart message to his brother Constantius, in behalf of Athanasius. The vigorous persecution raised by the Arians against the Catholics. The cold entertainment of the Sardican legates at the court of Constantius. A villanous plot against one of the legates detected and punished. Constantius's relaxation of the severities against the Catholics, why. The death of Gregory, the Arian bishop of Alexandria. Athanasius recalled by several letters from Constantius. His taking leave of the Western parts, and arrival at the court at Antioch. What discourse passed between him and the emperor. Constantius's letters and rescripts in his behalf. His positive denial of a church to the Arians at Alexandria, requested by the emperor; his journey towards Alexandria. The first occasion of Apollinaris's starting aside from the catholic church. A synod assembled at Jerusalem, which entertained Athanasius, and gave him communicatory letters. Constantius's kind message to him upon the death of Constans. His coming to Alexandria, and the mighty expressions of joy for his return. His composing the state of that church. Ursacius and Valens desire reconciliation; their libel of satisfaction sent to him. His making use of a church not yet dedicated, without the emperor's leave. The ill use made of this by his enemies. The fresh attempts of the Arians against him. Their address to the emperor to that purpose. The crimes charged upon him. Letters forged in his name. A synod holden at Sirmium against Photinus. A confession of faith drawn up in general terms. The disputation between Photinus and Basil of Ancyra. The mistake of Socrates and some others about this council. Constantius's march against Magnentius. The imposture used by Valens bishop of Mursa to gain favour with the emperor.

THE persons deputed by the council to carry an account of their synodical transactions to Constantius, were Vincentius bishop of Capua, and Euphratas bishop of Colen. Together with whom (says Theodoret,¹ though others not improbably suppose it was not till some time after) the emperor Constans sent Salias, a general in the army, a person renowned for his justice and piety. Their business was, to prevail with the emperor to put the

¹ Lib. ii. c. 8.

decrees of the synod in execution, and to permit the ejected bishops, whom they had restored, quietly to return to their several sees. And indeed, if it be true what Socrates reports,^u Constans wrote to his brother with some smartness, in this manner. "Athanasius and Paulus are here with me; whose cause having inquired into, I find they are persecuted upon the account of religion. If therefore you will engage to restore them to their sees, and to proceed against those who have unjustly created them all this trouble, I will send them to you. But if you shall refuse to do this, take notice, that I myself will come thither, and restore them their sees, whether you will or no." This letter is not mentioned by Athanasius himself, nor can it be assigned to the time of the Sardican synod, Paulus being at that time in quiet possession of his see of Constantinople, and therefore must necessarily be referred to some time preceding that council, when Paul was under his second exile. But whatever messages were sent to the Eastern court, they availed little, their enemies having got the start, and in all places having barred up the doors against them: for immediately upon their return from Sardica, they so wrought upon that emperor's easy and credulous temper,^w that he gave them leave to proceed against the catholic party; which they did with all imaginable force and cruelty, especially against the bishops and clergy. Some they loaded with the heaviest calumnies, others they banished, others they put to death, as at Adrianople; where, with the assistance of their old trusty friend, count Philagrius, they beheaded many; (the monuments of which savage inhumanity, Athanasius tells us, he himself saw without the city at his return;) and when Lucius the bishop reproved their impious practices, they bound him neck and hands with chains, and sent him into exile, where he died. Edicts they procured from the emperor for the casting them out of all cities and churches, and putting them to death wherever they should be found; and that all ports and gates should be strictly watched, that if any of the bishops restored by the synod should return to their bishoprics, they might be immediately apprehended: and having the advantage of the public posts, messengers were despatched into all parts; and where they met with any that disallowed their proceedings, they either scourged them like slaves, or imprisoned, or banished

^u Lib. ii. c. 22.

^w Athan. ad Monachos. s. 18.

them. And for Athanasius and his faithful clergy, edicts were particularly directed to the governors of that city, that if any of them came thither, or did but set their foot within the borders, they should be forthwith put to death. And of them that remained there, two presbyters and three deacons had been already banished into Armenia.

II. The legates, in the meanwhile, proceeded forwards in their journey, and arrived at the imperial court at Antioch, where they met with but cold entertainment. For the Arian faction had so blocked up all passages, that there was little hope their embassy should succeed: nay, not content to ruin them by public and open violence, they endeavoured by secret and hellish arts to blast and smother the reputation of these venerable bishops at their first arrival. For which end a plot is set on foot,^x contrived by Stephen bishop of Antioch, and carried on by him and his clergy, and such lewd persons as they had drawn into the conspiracy, which, in short, was thus: an infamous strumpet was by night introduced into the bishop's lodgings by one Onager, a fellow of a most debauched and flagitious life; he himself, with fifteen of his associates, being near at hand to assist and carry on the plot. And to mend the matter, it was the time of Easter, when this scene was laid. Some of the family being before-hand corrupted, the woman is let in, and having stripped herself, went directly to the apartment where the bishops lodged. The first she entered was that of Euphratas, the elder bishop of the two, whom she found asleep; but awaking with the noise, and finding by her voice that it was a woman, he began to cry out in a great amazement, supposing it to be some demon that had assumed a female shape. The woman (who had been made to believe, that a young gentleman, newly come to town, had desired her company that night) perceiving that it was a grave ancient bishop, was as much surprised on the other side, and presently shrieked and cried out aloud; nor could all that Onager and his party could say still her clamour, and persuade her to go on with the design. In short, the family is raised, the woman and seven of the conspirators are taken, and secured till next morning, when (the whole city flocking at the rumour of so strange a passage) the matter is heard and examined before the emperor in the palace, where it is quickly brought to light;

^x Athan. ad Monachos, c. 20. Theodor. l. ii. c. 9.

the woman confessing who it was that had set her on, and he impeaching Onager as the person that had acted him, and Onager casting the original contrivance of all upon Stephen the bishop. The issue was, that the bishops then at court were commanded by the emperor and the judges to depose Stephen, and place another in his room; which was immediately done: so singularly did his malicious and diabolical project return upon his own head.

III. How powerfully does the divine providence many times overrule the attempts of bad men, to an end quite contrary to their designs and expectations! This unfortunate enterprize not only failed in the main intention, but a little awakened the mind of Constantius, and made him suspect that cause could not be very good that needed such impious artifices to support it. Hereupon he began to relax the severity that had been used, commanded the deacons and presbyters that had been banished into Armenia, to return; and wrote expressly to Alexandria to stop all proceedings against Athanasius and his party. Indeed there had passed of late several despatches between him and his brother Constans about this matter; in one whereof^y (as we noted before) Constans plainly told him, that unless Athanasius were suddenly restored, and his enemies called to an account, he himself would come in person, and resettle him by force of arms. This smart message, together with what accidents had since ensued, turned the scale with him; who calling some of his bishops together, communicated to them his thoughts about these matters, and especially about the rupture that was like to ensue between him and his brother. Their advice was, that the least of evils was to be chosen, and that it were better Athanasius should be restored to his see, than the state of the empire put to the hazards of a civil war. And the council at this time was very wise and prudent, Constantius being engaged in a tedious and not very successful war against the king of Persia, an enemy big enough alone to employ the whole strength of the Eastern empire. But nothing more contributed to this composure, than the death of Gregory the Arian bishop of Alexandria, who died^z (not murdered by the citizens, as Theodoret^a makes him, by a mistake for his successor) ten months after the

^y Ext. ap. Socrat. l. ii. c. 22. vid. Theodor. l. ii. c. 8. Philost. l. iii. c. 12.

^z Athan. ad Monachos. s. 21.

^a Lib. ii. c. 12.

late transaction at Sardica. And now the chair, so much contended for, being vacant, Constantius might, with a more plausible salvo to his honour, recall Athanasius to repossess it. To which purpose he wrote to his brother Constans,^b desiring him that he would persuade and expedite his return, assuring him that for a whole year he had expected it, and had suffered nothing to be done to his prejudice at Alexandria, commanding also several of his great ministers of state to write to the same purpose. Next he sent letters to Athanasius to hasten his return, and that more than once, as we shall see by and by, when we have first remarked Athanasius's motions since the time we last parted from him.

IV. No sooner was the Sardican synod broken up, but Athanasius betook himself to Naissus,^c a city in Dacia, in the company (as is probable) of Gaudentius bishop of that place, who gave him, no doubt, a very welcome entertainment; where he received letters from the emperor Constans, acquainting him, it is like, how he had been transacting with his brother on his behalf. Hence he removed to Aquileia in Italy, where letters from Constantius found him, giving him leave, and inviting him to return. The first that came was in this form.^d

“Constantius the August, the Conqueror, to Athanasius the bishop.

“Our compassion and clemency will not suffer you any longer to be tossed upon the waves of a stormy and tempestuous sea; and though in such mean and miserable circumstances, driven out of your country, despoiled of your goods, and forced to wander up and down in wild and disconsolate places, yet has not our unwearied piety been regardless of you. We have indeed hitherto deferred to intimate to you this ready declaration of our good will, because we expected you should have come of your own accord, and have besought us to give remedy to your troubles. But because, it is like, fear has detained you from this course, we have sent you these our gracious letters, that forthwith you may securely come into our presence; to the end, that your desires being granted, and having tasted of our kindness

^b Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 51. ad Monachos. s. 21.

^c Athan. Apol. ad Const. s. 4. Apol. c. Arian. s. 51.

^d Ext. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 51. Socrat. l. ii. c. 23.

and benignity, you may be restored to your friends, your possessions, and country. For the same purpose I have written to my lord and brother the emperor Constans, desiring him to give you leave to return, that so, by the mutual consent of both, being restored to your see, you may have an equal instance of our grace and favour."

After this, came a second letter, to reinforce the security promised in the former,^e and to grant him the liberty of the public carriages for his more speedy conveyance to court. But all this assurance did not yet wholly conquer his suspicion and jealousy, not knowing whether, under these specious pretences, some snares might not be laid to entrap him. While therefore he hovered in this doubtful uncertainty, a third letter came,^f gently taking notice of his delays, and earnestly quickening his departure. It was sent by Aehitas, a deacon, to whom the emperor referred him for a more full satisfaction in that matter. So that now, abandoning all fears, he firmly resolved to return.

V. But before his departure from Aquileia, he received a summons from the emperor Constans to come to him into France.^g In obedience whereunto, he took his journey by Rome, that he might take his leave of pope Julius and his friends there, and thank them for the civilities wherewith he had been treated in that place. Good news it was to them at Rome to understand this happy turn of affairs, they looking upon it as a hopeful presage, that the Eastern court would now undertake the patronage of the catholic cause. And to add to the joy of his coming home, Julius wrote to the church of Alexandria,^h to congratulate with them for the return of their beloved bishop, a person whose eminent sufferings had made him illustrious through the world; and to commend them for their constant kindness and affection to him, not doubting but they would receive him with all possible joy and cheerfulness. Thus leaving Rome, and having despatched his attendance upon the emperor Constans, he put himself upon his journey into the East; and being honourably entertained and dismissed at every place, came at last to Antioch, where Constantius received him with great

^e Ext. locis supra cit.

^f Ext. *ibid.*

^g Athan. Apol. ad Const. s. 4. Apol. c. Arian. s. 51. vid. Sozom. l. iii. c. 20.

^h Ext. Epist. ap Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 52. et Socrat. l. ii. c. 23.

humanity, and gave him leave to return quietly to his see ; with letters directed to the governors for his safe conduct, and free passage thither. The good bishop, secure in the conscience of his own innocency, complained of the calamities and the calumnies he had suffered ;ⁱ desiring the emperor, that his enemies might not be admitted to exhibit any more slanders against him behind his back, that his majesty would be pleased now to call his accusers before him, that he might refute and convince them face to face. This the emperor would not assent to, but told him, that whatever calumnies had been entered upon record against him, should be abolished ; and that for the future he would receive no slanderous insinuations against him, wherein nothing should alter his resolution : all which he did not only simply promise, but seal with the solemnity of an oath. Accordingly he wrote in his behalf to the bishops and clergy of the catholic church,^k to let them know that the most reverend Athanasius being restored both by the synodal and imperial sentence, he expected that all acts and decrees heretofore made against him and his party should be buried in oblivion, and that not the least jealousy should remain ; and that the clergy of his party should be re-admitted to all those privileges which they had heretofore enjoyed. He wrote likewise to the laity of Alexandria to the same purpose,^l that they should with all readiness receive their bishop, one universally renowned for the piety of his manners, and the integrity of his life ; that they should join in communion, and live in all peace and concord with him ; and that if any should attempt to raise tumults and seditions, he had given order to the judges, that they should be punished according to law. A third rescript was directed to Nestorius,^m the augustal prefect, and to the respective governors of Augustannica, Thebais, and Libya, commanding, that whatever had been inserted into the public records of Egypt, to the scandal and prejudice of Athanasius and his party, should be defaced and razed out ; and that they should be entirely reinstated in their former privileges and immunities. The Arians, (who beheld all this with an evil eye,) not being able to hinder it, re-

ⁱ Athan. ad Monachos. s. 22.

^k Ext. Epist. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 54. et Socrat. l. ii. c. 23.

^l Ext. ap. Athan. ibid. s. 55. et Socrat. ubi supr.

^m Ext. ap. Athan. ibid. s. 56. et Socrat. ibid.

solved, however, to make some advantage of these immense favours which the emperor had conferred upon Athanasius, and thereupon prompted him," in consideration of so many obligations, to request this one kindness from him, that of all the churches of Alexandria, he would grant one for those that were of a different communion from him. To whom the bishop modestly replied, "It is in your power, sir, to command and do whatever you please, nor shall I attempt to contradict you; but your majesty, I hope, will not think it unreasonable for me to beg the like favour from you; that here at Antioch and elsewhere, one church may be allowed to the Catholics, for those that are of their own communion." The emperor could not deny the request to be fair and just, which the Arians perceiving, let fall the motion, well knowing, that if granted, their sect would do little good at Alexandria, where Athanasius was held in such a mighty esteem and veneration, that he would rather daily diminish and drain their party: whereas at Antioch the Catholics were numerous; and though themselves governed there with so much authority, yet could they not generally bring over the people to their side.

VI. All things running thus smooth and easy, Athanasius set out in his journey towards Alexandria. Coming to Laodicea,^o he was very familiarly attended by Apollinaris, a man of polite parts and learning, and one of the clergy in that city; who, for no other reason than this civility to Athanasius, was instantly excommunicated by George, the Arian bishop of that place; and the sentence being obstinately persisted in, is said to have given the first occasion to Apollinaris to start aside, and set up a sect of his own. Hence he went into Palestine, where he was joyfully entertained by Maximus bishop of Jerusalem, a venerable confessor, (who under the Maximinian persecution had lost an eye, and the use of his right leg, in the defence of the faith,) who assembling a synod of neighbour bishops, they unanimously received him to communion, and wrote to the bishops of Egypt and Libya, and to the clergy of Alexandria to this effect: ^P "That they could never sufficiently magnify the goodness of God, that after so dismal a face of things had so wonderfully

ⁿ Socrat. l. ii. c. 23. Sozom. l. iii. c. 20. Theodor. l. ii. c. 12. Rufin. l. i. c. 19.

^o Sozom. l. vi. c. 25.

^P Ext. Epist. ap. Athan. c. Arian. s. 57. et Sozom. l. iii. c. 22.

restored their true bishop and pastor, the fruit of their many prayers and tears; that they themselves had embraced him, and communicated with him, and as evidences of it had sent these communicatory letters; and that next to their gratitude to God, they were bound to pray for the happiness of the emperors, by whose favour he had obtained so honourable a restitution." This letter, subscribed by sixteen bishops, was delivered to Athanasius, who took his leave and departed. But while he was thus on his way, an accident happened, that had like to have spoiled the whole scheme of his affairs; I mean the death of the emperor Constans, treacherously slain by Magnentius in France; a prince of great zeal and piety towards the church, and a particular friend and patron to Athanasius. With him it was thought would fall the prosperity of Athanasius, and indeed the Arians began now to think the day their own, and to conclude, that for all his haste, he should never see Alexandria. The loss of so great a patron, and the terror of such potent enemies, could not but startle the good man; when on a sudden these black clouds, that seemed gathering about him, were dispelled by a kind message from Constantius, sent by Palladius, controller of the palace, and Asterius, governor of Armenia, who brought him the following letter.⁹

“Constantius the August, the Conqueror, to Athanasius.

“How earnestly I ever wished all happiness and prosperity to my brother Constans, you are not ignorant; and with what trouble and resentment I entertained the news of his being cut off by barbarous and wicked hands, you may easily imagine. And because there are not wanting some, who in this calamitous time, will be ready to terrify you with frightful rumours, we have thought good to direct these our letters to you, exhorting and commanding you, that, as becomes a bishop, you go on to instruct and build up the people in the true religion, and, as you were wont, to attend to the ministeries of devotion and prayer, giving no heed to vain idle stories. For that I am firmly purposed, according to my former resolution, that you shall constantly continue bishop of that see. The divine Providence preserve you, dear father, many years.”

⁹ Ext. ap. Athan. Apol. ad Const. s. 23. et ad Monachos. s. 24.

VII. Encouraged with this message, Athanasius finished the remainder of his journey, arriving at Alexandria Ann. Chr. 350, near nine years since his last departure, and more than two full years since his restitution by the Sardican council. The long time of his absence, and the many and great calamities he had suffered in defence of the faith, did not a little enhance the joys and triumphs of his return. The bishops and clergy,^r and people from all parts, flocked to meet him; at once glad to see their beloved bishop unexpectedly returned, and to find themselves relieved of the yoke of those who had hitherto cruelly lorded it over them, and exercised a tyranny both over their persons and their consciences. Public feasts and entertainments were made up and down the city; and that God also might have his share of praise and honour, sacred solemnities were frequently kept, and that with more than ordinary strains of devotion, people exhorting one another to a mighty zeal and constancy in religion. And so far were even some young men and women transported, as upon this occasion to dedicate themselves to a stricter course of piety: alms and charity were distributed with a liberal hand, the hungry were fed, the naked clothed, widows and orphans provided for; the great contention was, who should express most forwardness in acts of piety and virtue, so that every family seemed to be turned into a little church. In sum, that church which of late was overrun with nothing but disorder and confusion, was now happily blessed with a profound admirable peace; and Athanasius not only honoured at home, but caressed and saluted by bishops from abroad, letters of peace frequently passing betwixt him and them. But, above all others, the case of Ursacius and Valens, the one bishop of Singidunum, the other of Mursa, is especially remarkable; men they were of unsettled principles, and of a light desultory temper, apt to turn as the wind blew from any quarter; great instruments they had been of the Arian party in all their proceedings against Athanasius, deposed by Julius bishop of Rome, restored upon their profession of repentance in the convention at Milan; but immediately apostatizing, were again condemned in the synod of Sardica. And finding now that Athanasius was likely to be received into favour in the Eastern court, they again tacked about, and in the

^r Athan. ad Monachos, s. 25. Theodor. l. ii. c. 12.

year 349, exhibit a libel of satisfaction to pope Julius,^s wherein they openly confess, that whatever crimes they had heretofore charged upon Athanasius, were false, and had been all forged by them, and were of no force and value; that they now prayed for pardon, and were heartily desirous to entertain communion with Athanasius, expressly condemning Arius for an heretic, and all those that sided with him. To Athanasius also, some time after, they wrote this following letter.^t

“To our lord and brother Athanasius the bishop, Ursacius and Valens, bishops.

“Dear brother,

“Taking the opportunity of Moses our brother and fellow-presbyter’s coming to you, by him we heartily salute you from Aquileia, wishing you health, and that our letters may come safe to your perusal. And hereby shall we be satisfied in your acceptance, if you also please to write back to us. For by these our letters, we give you to understand, that we hold with you the peace and communion of the church. God keep you, brother.”

After which they freely subscribed to those communicatory letters, which Athanasius, by Peter and Irenæus, his presbyters, and Ammonius a laic, had sent up and down to the several bishops of the catholic church, that they ought to testify their communion with him.

VIII. The first thing of note he did after his return, was to assemble the bishops of his province,^u who confirmed the decrees of the Sardican council, and what had been done in the late synod at Jerusalem. So that all prejudices seemed now to be laid asleep, and the Arian interest in those parts went down the wind apace, the people flocking in such vast numbers to the public assemblies, that the churches were not able to contain them. There was at Alexandria^v a stately fabric called Hadrianum, (probably because built by the emperor Adrian,) and afterwards the Licinian or royal Gymnasium; this, in the reign of Constantius, was repaired and turned into a church, and called

^s Ext. ap. Athan. Apol. c. Arian. s. 58. Hilar. in fragm. ii. s. 20. Sozom. l. iii. c. 23.

^t Ext. ubi supr.

^u Socrat. l. ii. c. 26. Sozom. l. iv. c. 1.

^v Epiph. adv. Arian. Hæres. lxi. c. 2.

Cæsarea, or the great church ; begun it had been in the time of Gregory the Arian bishop, and was now brought to perfection by Athanasius, but yet had not received the solemnity of a dedication. Hither in the Easter holidays^w (when the congregations were thronged with a more than ordinary confluence of people) it was importunately demanded, that the people might be admitted to assemble, and that prayers and the holy eucharist might be administered, as a place more capable of reception, and to avoid that crowd and confusion that attended the lesser churches. Athanasius used all prudent arts to put them off, and to delay the time till leave might be obtained to dedicate the church ; but the people, impatient, plainly told him, that if their desires were not presently granted, they would leave the town, and assemble in the open fields, being willing rather to undergo a journey abroad, than to celebrate the festival with so much trouble and inconveniency at home. In the pentecostal solemnities the conflux being still greater, and the importunities of the people more loud and clamorous, he was wearied with them ; and finding that several, both young and aged persons, had been almost crowded to death, he was forced at length to comply with their request, and to permit congregations to be held in that place : which how it was improved by his adversaries into a formal charge and accusation, we shall see anon.

IX. While the church of Alexandria enjoyed this serene and flourishing season, under the conduct and influence of its venerable prelate, another storm began to threaten, and the clouds to return after rain. Sooner may sore eyes endure the light of the sun, than envy and malice digest the prosperity of its enemies. The Arians were not a little vexed to see Athanasius live in so much honour at home and estimation abroad, and the catholic interest prosper so in every place, and therefore resolve now upon fresh attempts against him. And first they deal with Ursacius and Valens,^x whom they persuade to recant their recantation, pretending their penitential confession to have been extorted through fear of the emperor Constans. Next at a common consult it was agreed, that they should make an address to Constantius, which they did to this effect : “ We told you, sir, from the beginning, though we had not the happiness to be believed, what would ensue upon your recalling Athanasius, that

^w Athan. Apol. ad Const. c. 14.

^x Athan. ad Monachos, s. 29.

thereby you would undermine and ruin our party, he being all along our professed open enemy, whom he ceases not to anathematize, and to inveigh against in the writings which he disperses through the world, so that almost all embrace his communion; and even of those who were of our own side, some have already gone over to him, and others stand ready for it. We, in the meanwhile, being deserted on all hands, our cause is in danger of being exposed; and not we only, but your majesty to be accounted an heretic, and perhaps to be thrust down into the lowest and worst rank of them, that of the Manichees. Renew therefore your proceedings against them, and undertake the patronage of a party that truly owns you for their emperor."

X. And that they might not seem to press this without some plausible pretence, certain new charges are framed against him, and exhibited to the emperor; as, that he had usurped upon the imperial authority,^y by presuming, of his own head, to celebrate the *encenia*, the festival dedication of the great church at Alexandria, a thing that might not be done without express warrant from the emperor: that he had by letters^z held treasonable correspondence with the tyrant Magnentius, who having murdered the emperor Constans in France, had invaded the imperial dignity; and to outface the matter, pretended that they had a copy of the letters. In which there was no more truth, no, nor shadow of a foundation whereon to build such a story, further than that Magnentius sending ambassadors to Constantius, (whereof two were bishops, Servatius of Tongren, and Maximinus of Triers, and two of the nobility, counts Clement and Valens,) they put in at Alexandria, where the bishops, as being catholic prelates, and his ancient and intimate friends, were courteously treated by Athanasius; which was but an act of common kindness and gratitude, they being his old acquaintance, by whom, in the time of his banishment, and at his lowest ebb, he had been generously owned and entertained. And though at the same time, to the very face of the other ambassadors, and in the presence of several great officers of Constantius, he declared his severest detestation of Magnentius's proceedings, and publicly prayed for Constantius's happiness and prosperity, and afterwards prayed the emperor strictly to examine the matter, and offered himself to undergo a thou-

^y Athan. Apol. ad Const. s. 14.

^z Ibid. s. 6.

sand deaths, if but the just suspicion of any such thing could be proved against him, (for the letters pretended, how easy was it to counterfeit his, yea, even the emperor's own hand; besides that, his own amanuenses were ready to make oath, that he never wrote any such letter, and he desired that Magnentius's secretaries might be examined, whether any such ever came to their hands.) Yet did it serve a present turn well enough, to prejudice and exasperate the emperor's mind against him. Nor did they stay here, but being extremely desirous to be rid of him by any means,² forged a letter in his name to Constantius, begging his leave that he might go into Italy for the settling some ecclesiastical affairs. Immediately a warrant is despatched from court by Montanus, an officer of the palace, not only giving him license to go, but taking care for the accommodations of his voyage. The good man was greatly surprised with the message, but smelling the design, told Montanus, he was most ready to go at the emperor's order, but the letter did only give him leave, not command him to depart. This not succeeding, they turn the design the other way, charging him with contumacy and disobedience to the emperor's authority, in not quitting his see, when he commanded it. So dexterous is malice to improve any advantage, and to sail forwards with every wind.

XI. It is no wonder, if by such false and villanous insinuations, the mind of that credulous prince was easily inflamed against Athanasius. But, however, at present he thought good to dissemble his resentments, till he had composed the distractions of the empire. He was now at Sirmium in Pannonia, where, by smooth and politic transactions, he had brought over and secured Vetrannio, general of the foot, who, about the same time with Magnentius, had usurped the purple, and set up for himself. While he was here, complaint was made against Photinus, bishop of that see, for his heterodox and unsound opinions. He had been condemned in the synodal assembly at Milan, and presently after in that at Sardica; two years after which, (as St. Hilary expressly affirms,^a) that is, anno 349, the Western bishops met out of several provinces, by whom he was again sentenced as an heretic, and deposed from his bishopric. But the people thereupon growing into tumults and faction, the synodal sentence could not take effect. Another opportunity now presenting itself,

² Athan. Apol. ad Const. s. 19.

^a Fragm. ii. s. 19.

the bishops that were about the court persuade the emperor to convene a synod about this matter, which consisted chiefly of Eastern bishops, the Western parts being at this time under the tyranny of Magnentius. The first thing they did, was to frame a confession of faith, drawn up in such general terms, as both parties might assent to it, and accordingly it is approved and expounded by St. Hilary. It was this.^b

“We believe in one God, Father Almighty, Maker and Creator of all things, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named: and in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son our Lord, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, by whom all things were made both in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, who is the Word and Wisdom, the true Light and Life; who in these last times was made man for us, and born of an holy Virgin, who arose from the dead the third day, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and will come again in the end of the world, to judge the quick and the dead, and to render to every one according to his works; whose kingdom shall have no end, but shall continue to infinite ages. For he shall sit at the right hand of his Father, not only now, but in the world to come. We believe also in the Holy Ghost, that is, the Comforter, whom our Lord promised to his apostles, and after his ascension into heaven, sent down to teach and bring all things to their remembrance, by whom also the hearts of those that truly believe in him are sanctified.”

To this they added many particular anathemas against those that affirmed the Son to be of things not existing, or of any other substance, and not of God, or that there was any time or age when he was not, or that he was of Mary only, according to God's prescience, and not born of the Father, and with God before all worlds, and that all things were made by him; or that say, the divine essence is dilated or contracted, or that the Son makes it so, or is the dilatation of the divine essence; or that being born of Mary he was a mere man, or that being God and man, he is the unbegotten; or that the Word being made flesh, shall opine that the Word was changed into flesh, or suffered

^b Ext. ap. Socrat. l. ii. c. 30. et Hilar. de Synod. s. 38.

any change by that assumption, or that by his crucifixion his divinity was obnoxious to any corruption, passion, or alteration, or that it sustained any diminution or separation; or that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are but one Person, or that the Holy Ghost is the unbegotten God, or that it is part of the Father and the Son, or that they three are three Gods; whoever shall affirm any of these (some whereof they more particularly explain) they denounce him accursed, and cut off from the catholic church.

XII. The confession thus drawn up, was offered to Photinus to subscribe,^c which he rejected, and was thereupon again deposed, and Germinius placed in his room. After which, they proffered upon his recantation and subscription to restore him, but he refused it; and being a man of an acute wit, and a voluble tongue, appealed to the emperor, and challenged his enemies to a disputation. The emperor granted his petition, ordering Basil, bishop of Ancyra, to manage the cause against him, and appointing Thalassius, Marcellinus, Datian, and some others of the senatorian order, as judges, to see things fairly carried in the disputation, public notaries also attending to take things as they were delivered, whose notes in three copies being severally sealed up, one was carried to the emperor, another was left with the judge, and the third remained with Basil himself. The issue was, Photinus was baffled, and beat out of the field, and shortly after banished; where he employed his time in writing against the catholic faith. This synod was held at Sirmium, in the year of the consulship of Sergius and Nigrinianus, that is, Ann. Chr. 351, as both Socrates^d and Sozomen^e positively say, though, by confounding this with some later synodical conventions at this place, they strangely mistake, both in the persons of some of the bishops, and in the number of the creeds then agreed on, which they make to be three, whenas one only was published at this time: a mistake that so far imposed upon Baronius,^f that he makes not this synod at Sirmium to convene till six years after. Whenas the things now transacted, the emperor's residence at this time at Sirmium, but especially the date of the year fixed by Socrates, (who is wont to be most accurate in noting the years of the consuls,) do place it at this

^c Socrat. l. ii. c. 30. Sozom. l. iv. c. 6. Vid. Epiph. adv. Phot. Hæres. lxxi. c. 2.

^d Lib. ii. c. 29.

^e Lib. iv. c. 6.

^f Ad Ann. 357.

time past all peradventure. Nor must it be forgotten, that it is not one of the least errors that Socrates commits in this case, that he makes the confession we have here set down, to have been composed by Marcus, bishop of Arethusa, whereas the formula dictated by him was not agreed on and drawn up till at least eight years after this, whereof more in its due time and place.

XIII. Affairs being quieted at Sirmium, and Vetrannio reduced into order, Constantius was at liberty to prosecute his expedition against Magnentius, towards which he immediately set forth. Several skirmishes there had been already, but now both armies were met in the plains of Mursa, a city in Pannonia, where, after a fierce and hot engagement, Magnentius's army was wholly routed, and himself forced to fly from place to place, till at length in France he put a period to his own life. Constantius, not daring to venture himself in the fight,^g expected the issue of the battle in a church dedicated to the martyrs, situate without the city, attended by none but Valens, bishop of that place, who, above all the prelates of the Arian faction, was dear to him. And it is not unpleasant to remark, how bold a cheat he at this time put upon the emperor. For having so laid his intelligence, as to have the first account of things before the emperor's despatches could arrive, while Constantius was distracted with a thousand cares and fears, he brings him the joyful tidings of an absolute victory. And when the emperor demanded to see the messenger that had so speedily brought the news, Valens told him, that it was brought to him by an angel, who came on purpose to impart it to him. An imposture which, according to his design, did not a little advance his credit with Constantius, who used publicly to profess, that he had gained that victory by Valens's merits, not by the power and courage of his army. This battle was fought, and victory obtained, anno 351, as the *Fasti Consulares* expressly place it,^h and not, as Baronius heedlessly makes it, anno 353, which was indeed the year in which Magnentius died, as the same *Fasti* do declare. And like enough it is, he supposed Magnentius both to have been overthrown, and to have ended his life the same year, which betrayed him into that mistake.

^g Sulp. Sev. l. ii. c. 38.

^h *Idat. Fast. Const. Ann. Chr. 351.*

SECTION IX.

HIS ACTS FROM THE DEATH OF POPE JULIUS TILL THE BANISHMENT
OF LIBERIUS.

The Arian attempts upon pope Liberius. An epistle forged under his name. The emperor's edict for all to subscribe against Athanasius. Liberius's interposal with Constantius about that matter. A convention of bishops at Arles, wherein the Catholics are overreached. The papal legate prevailed with to subscribe. Another synod holden at Milan. The proposal of Eusebius of Vercellæ to that synod. Constantius threatens the catholic prelates; their resolute reply. Dionysius of Milan retracts his subscription. The several banishments of catholic bishops. Pope Liberius sent for by Constantius, his rejecting the motions and presents sent to him; he is conveyed to Milan; his free and undaunted address to the emperor. The dialogue that passed between him and Constantius, concerning Athanasius and his affairs, related at large. Liberius banished to Berea in Thrace. The money sent him by the emperor to bear his charges generously refused.

CONSTANTIUS, thus rid of the dangers that threatened him, and elated with his prosperous success against Magnentius, found himself at leisure to take Athanasius and his cause to task.ⁱ Some attempts had been made of late by the Arians, to bring over the Western bishops to consent to the condemning of Athanasius, and herein especially they had dealt at Rome. Pope Julius, Athanasius's fast friend, was newly dead, and Liberius promoted to the chair, with whom they hope to speed better than they had done with his predecessor. An address therefore is made to him, with letters containing the crimes that were charged upon Athanasius.^j Liberius summons an assembly of bishops, communicates the letter to them, and having at the same time received an epistle subscribed by seventy-five Egyptian prelates in favour of Athanasius, returned answer to the Orientalists, that he could not credit the charge, and that it seemed unreasonable to condemn him, whom the far major part of bishops had absolved. There is indeed an epistle extant under his name,^k (ancient enough, being written, no doubt, about that time,) wherein he assures them, that he had by special messengers cited Athanasius to appear, and answer for himself at Rome, otherwise that he would exclude him the communion of that church; that upon his refusal he had, according to their desire, embraced

ⁱ Zosim. l. ii. p. 701.^j Epist. Liber. ad Const. ap. Hilar. fragm. v. s. 2.^k Ap. Hilar. fragm. iv. s. 1.

peace with them, and shut out Athanasius from all ecclesiastic communion with himself. This letter Baronius takes a great deal of pains to prove to be false and spurious,¹ and to have been forged by the Arians under his name. And the thing, I confess, is not improbable, it being evident that Liberius, for several years after his entrance upon that see, stood firm to Athanasius and the catholic cause, nor could be drawn to subscribe to his deposition, by all the arts the emperor could use, as the heathen historian of that time assures us.^m And, indeed, the short remark at the end of that letter, as far from St. Hilary's mind, as darkness from light, puts it past all question, that the epistle is supposititious, added by some other hand.

II. Not being able to do any good by fair and peaceable ways, (the Catholics generally rejecting the motion,) they were constrained to have recourse to their old methods of force and power. And first Constantius published an edict,ⁿ that all should subscribe to Athanasius's condemnation, and that they who refused should be banished. This made the Catholics look about them, and think it high time, if possible, to prevent the storm they saw coming upon them. Liberius immediately despatched away Vincentius of Capua,^o Marcellus a Campanian bishop, and others, to the emperor, then lying at Arles in France, to desire of him, that a synod might be called at Aquileia, for the composing these matters. Coming to Arles, they found there a company of Arian bishops, and some few of the West, whom they had already drawn to be of their party, especially Saturnius or Saturninus bishop of Arles, and Fortunatian of Aquileia, who had heretofore stoutly stood for Athanasius in the Sardican council. It being resolved that things should be here taken under examination, they could not presently agree upon the method of procedure; on the one side it was desired that they might immediately proceed to the case of Athanasius; on the other it was insisted on, that they might first discuss matters of faith, and that it was improper to judge the person till they had first taken cognizance of the thing. However, that for the peace of the church, they were willing to yield to the proposals

¹ Ad Ann. 352, num. 14, 15, etc.

^m Am. Marcell. l. xv. c. 7.

ⁿ Sulp. Sev. l. ii. c. 39.

^o Epist. ad Const. ap. Hilar. fragm. vi. s. 2. et ad Osius Ep. i. ibid. Vid. Sulp. Sev. l. ii. c. 39.

of the Eastern bishops in reference to Athanasius, upon condition that they also should condemn the Arian doctrine ; which was assented to, and mutually given under their hands. But when they came synodically to assemble, Valens and his party flew off, and plainly told them, they could not condemn the doctrine of Arius, and that the only business they had in hand, was to agree that no communion should be held with Athanasius. Great importunity was used, backed with frowns and threatenings, to bring them over, till at length Vincentius himself,^p the aged bishop of Capua, the premier papal legate, (which office he had long since sustained in the great Nicene council,) was prevailed with to subscribe to Athanasius's condemnation, whose example was followed by most of the Western bishops then present. Some few stood their ground, whom no terrors nor promises could move ; and amongst them Paulinus bishop of Triers, who for his exemplary constancy was forced into exile.

III. Liberius, desirous to stop the current, did by several messages importune the emperor, that matters might be referred to the decision of another synod, which was accordingly summoned to meet at Milan, whither Constantius was then removed. There met (say my authors^q) to the number of above three hundred bishops, most of them out of the Western provinces. But the number is too great, easily to gain belief, and therefore a learned man not improbably conjectures, that there is a mistake in the copies, and that three hundred is crept in for thirty ; for just so many are found to have subscribed the synodical epistle.^r Yet I cannot but think that there must have been somewhat a greater number in a synod convened upon so important an occasion, and where the emperor himself was present, though perhaps no more might be present at the subscription, not to mention those who refused to subscribe. Hither came Eusebius bishop of Vercelles, Lucifer of Calaris in Sardinia, and some others, as legates from Rome, where they remained ten days before they were admitted into council ; the synod in the mean while sending Customius and Germinius with a letter to Eusebius,^s to let him know how desirous they were of the peace and unity of the

^p Vid. Epp. Liber. loc. cit. et Athan. Apol. ad Const. s. 27.

^q Socrat. l. ii. c. 36. Sozom. l. iv. c. 9.

^r Ext. ap. Baron. ad Ann. 355. num. 22.

^s Ext. ibid. num. 6.

church, in order whereunto it was necessary that he should communicate counsels with them, and agree to what almost the whole world had determined in the case of the sacrilegious (so they term him) Athanasius; entering into the synod, Eusebius was required to subscribe against Athanasius,[†] who presently replied, that they ought first to be satisfied about his soundness in the faith, and that he plainly perceived there were those there present, that were infected with the Arian heresy. Whereupon he laid the Nicene creed down before them, promising he would comply with what they desired, if they would own and subscribe that faith. Dionysius bishop of Milan took up the paper, and began to underwrite it, which Valens bishop of Mursa perceiving, snatched the pen and paper out of his hand, saying, that that might by no means be suffered. The thing was contested with great noise and opposition, and the report of it quickly spread amongst the people, who entertained it with equal grief and indignation, insomuch that the heads of the party, not daring to hazard the effects of a popular resentment, thought good to translate the synod from the church (where it had been hitherto held) into the palace, where they might command with greater authority, and be more secure from the rage and fury of the people. And here Constantius himself sat as judge and moderator,[‡] though a very partial one; for no sooner did he perceive Athanasius's accusers at any time to flag and falter, but he himself would interpose, and help them out; and when Paulinus, Lucifer, and others of the catholic bishops, pressed hard upon the witnesses, and pleaded that Ursacius and Valens had heretofore more than once solemnly disowned and recanted the charge, and therefore could not now again be admitted as competent witnesses in this case, he hastily started up, and said, "I myself do here accuse Athanasius, upon my account give credit to their testimony." The Catholics modestly replied, that he could not implead Athanasius, nor any judgment pass in the case, the party accused not being present to answer, and defend himself: that they were not now judging a civil cause, where the emperor's bare word might take place; but concerning a bishop, where the accuser and accused should be equally and impartially dealt with: that if what his majesty had to object was only by hearsay, it was fit that he should also give credit to

[†] Hilar. lib. i. ad Const. s. 8.

[‡] Athan. ad Monachos, s. 76.

what was said on Athanasius's behalf; but if he would not believe him, and yet believe the others, it was more than suspicious, that it was merely to please his majesty that they had brought in that charge against Athanasius.

IV. This answer silenced the emperor, who yet was the more enraged for being baffled; and that what was wanting in right might be supplied by force, he resolved to banish the catholic prelates: and for Athanasius himself, severe things were decreed against him, that he should be punished according to his merits, that the churches should be delivered up to the Arians, and that they should be left to their liberty to act whatever might be for the interest of their cause. Thirty of the bishops then present subscribed to his condemnation, amongst whom Dionysius bishop of Milan being drawn in, did presently retract his assent, and, by a wife of Eusebius bishop of Vercelles, got his name stricken out of the roll. Before they parted, they published a pestilent epistle under the emperor's name,^v which they did to this end, that if it took with the people, it might seem to come out with the sanction of public authority, but if it met with no entertainment, the odium of it might fall upon the emperor; who might the easier be excused, being as yet a catechumen, that could not be supposed to be critically versed in the mysteries of the faith. But no sooner was it read publicly in the church, but the people generally testified their abhorrence of it. Constantius sending for the chief of the catholic bishops,^w commanded them once more to subscribe the synodal decree, and to communicate with the other party. Whereat when they stood amazed, and replied, that this was not the rule and canon of the church, he briskly answered, "What I command, let that be your canon, for so the Syrian bishops are wont to entertain my edicts; either therefore submit, or you shall immediately into banishment." The good bishops, yet more astonished, lift up their hands to heaven, and freely declaring their minds, told him, that the empire was not his, but God's, from whom he had received it, and that he should be afraid to provoke him to take it from him. They put him in mind of the day of judgment, and advised him not to offer violence to the church, not to blend the civil power with ecclesiastic constitutions, nor to introduce Arianism into the church of God. His anger and impatience could bear no

^v Sulp. Sever. l. ii. c. 39.

^w Athan. ad Monachos. s. 33.

more, but full of rage and threatening he brandished his sword at them, and forthwith commanded several of them to be banished; Eusebius of Vercelles to Scythopolis; Lucifer Catartanus into Palestine, where he wrote against the emperor; Dionysius of Milan into Cappadocia, where he died; and Paulinus of Triers, who in the fifth year of his banishment died in Phrygia.

V. But all this was not thought sufficient, unless pope Liberius was either brought over, or removed out of the way. Constantius^x therefore presently despatches Eusebius the eunuch, his chamberlain, away to Rome, with letters and presents to Liberius; whom he acquainted with the emperor's counsel and command, and taking him gently by the hand, shewed him the presents, which, said he, are all at your service, if you will but comply with the emperor. But the bishop rejected them with a generous scorn, and told him, that he could not consent to condemn Athanasius, a person who had been once and again synodically absolved from all the crimes charged upon him, and whom the church of Rome had entertained and dismissed with peace; that it would look strange, if he should reject him being absent, with whom when present he had maintained friendship and agreement, and that this was not the canon nor custom of the church; that if the emperor was concerned for the peace of the church, and desirous that what had been written in defence of Athanasius might be razed and stifled, it was but fit that what had been written against him should be blotted out also; and such a synod called, where neither the emperor might be present, nor any of his great ministers of state, to influence and awe the council; where nothing but the fear of God and the apostolic constitution might take place, that so the faith agreed upon at Nice might be first confirmed, and the favourers of Arianism condemned, and that then the case of Athanasius and his opposers might be discussed and canvassed. This had been the way of the ancients, and with this resolution he might acquaint the emperor. The eunuch was vexed to find the bishop not only unwilling to subscribe, but obstinately infected with what he called heresy; whereupon he broke out into high words and threatenings, and taking up the presents, went out of doors, and entering into St. Peter's church, offered them at the altar:

^x Id. *ibid.* s. 35.

which Liberius no sooner understood, but he sharply chid the guardian of the church for suffering it, and threw the gifts that had been offered out of doors: which still more exasperated the eunuch, who made no over-favourable representation of these things to the emperor. Hereupon, several great officers of the palace were sent to Rome, and letters written to Leontius prefect of the city,^y commanding that, either by fair means or force, Liberius should be forthwith sent to court. The rumour quickly raised infinite confusion and consternation in the city, every man thinking himself concerned to provide for his own safety either by concealment or flight. Liberius was kept under strict watches, and at length by night conveyed to Milan: where, at his arrival, he freely told the emperor, that he should do well to leave off persecuting Christians, and not think to make him a property to introduce impiety into the church; and that he was ready to suffer any thing, rather than to become Arian; that he advised him to take heed how he unworthily fought against him that had made him emperor, and that he would find "it hard for him to kick against the pricks;" that for his own part he was come with an expectation of being banished, before any thing was charged upon him; that so it might appear, that the rest that had been served so, had been brought to it merely through malice and falsehood.

VI. There is a more particular account still extant, of what passed between them at this meeting, extracted out of the Acts of the imperial consistory, where this conference was held, at which were present the emperor, Liberius, Eusebius the eunuch, and Epictetus an Arian bishop. The sum of the discourse is set down by Sozomen,^z but it is extant entire in Theodoret,^a which, because it chiefly concerns the cause of Athanasius, we shall here insert.

CONSTANTIUS. Forasmuch as you are a Christian, and bishop of our city, we have thought good to send for you, and admonish you to renounce communion with the lewd and wretched cause of Athanasius. A thing wherein the world has consented, having by synodal sentence banished him all ecclesiastical communion.

LIBERIUS. Sir, the determination of ecclesiastic affairs ought to be made with all possible equity and impartiality. If there-

^y Vid. Am. Marcell. l. xv. c. 7.

^z Lib. iv. c. 11.

^a Lib. ii. c. 16.

fore it please your majesty, let the cause be judged; and if it shall appear that Athanasius deserves to be condemned, then, according to the rules of ecclesiastical proceedings, let sentence pass against him; for we cannot condemn a person whom we have not judged.

CONST. The whole world has already passed sentence upon his impious cause; but he, as he has done all along, does but trifle away the time, and make light of it.

LIB. They who gave this account, did not themselves see the things done, but wrote them for vain glory, or fear, or to avoid the disgrace which your majesty might cast upon them.

CONST. What glory, what fear, what disgrace do you mean?

LIB. Those, I mean, who do not love the glory of God, but preferring your bounty and favour, have condemned him, whom they have neither seen nor judged: a thing which all true Christians do abhor.

CONST. Was he not present in the synod at Tyre, and there judged and condemned by all the prelates of the empire?

LIB. No, sir, he was never judged where himself was present; for they who condemned him in that assembly, passed that unjust sentence upon him after his departure from the council.

EUSEBIUS. [In the synod of Nice^b he was convict of being an enemy to the catholic faith.]

LIB. There were indeed but five of them that judged him, those five who were purposely sent by the rest into Maræotis, to forge and make acts and records against him. Of these five, two are dead, Theognis and Theodorus; the three others, Maris, Valens, and Ursacius, are still alive; who, for this very cause, were condemned in the Sardican synod, and who afterwards in a synod preferred their libels, and begged pardon for the acts which in Maræotis they had falsely and clandestinely framed against Athanasius; which libels we have now by us. And now, sir, judge, whom we ought rather to believe, and communicate with: those who first condemned Athanasius, and then asked pardon for what they had done, or those who lately condemned them for such irregular practices?

EPICETUS. It is not, sir, for the faith's sake, or for defence of ecclesiastical judgments, that Liberinus at this time makes all

^b Nescio quid sibi voluerit hic Eunuchus, etc. Stultus stulta loquitur. Vales. in loc.

this stir, but that he may boast to the senators at Rome, that he has been too hard for the emperor.

CONST. How considerable a part of the world, Liberius, do you reckon yourself, that you only should patronise a vile man, and thereby disturb the peace of the whole Roman empire?

LIB. Though I were alone in this matter, yet the cause of the faith would not be thereby prejudiced. There was once a time when there were but three found that refused to comply with the king's command.

EUSEB. What, then, you make our emperor a second Nebuchadnezzar?

LIB. No, I do not; but you rashly condemn a person whom we have not judged. All that I require is, that first the Nicene creed may be ratified by an universal subscription; then, that our brethren that are banished may be recalled, and restored to their sees; and if then it appear, that they who now raised all these stirs do embrace the apostolic faith, we may all synodically meet at Alexandria, where both the accusers and the accused are, and the advocates of each party; where having thoroughly examined matters, we may unanimously pronounce sentence in the case.

EPICT. But the public carriages will not suffice to convey so many bishops thither.

LIB. As for that, ecclesiastical causes need not the assistance of the public carriages. For every church may easily enough, at their own charge, transport their bishops by sea.

CONST. The things that have been already agreed on cannot be undone, for the vote of the majority of bishops ought to prevail. You are the only person that retains the friendship of that wicked man.

LIB. Sir, I never yet heard a judge lay impiety to any person's charge, who was not there to answer for himself; a thing that would rather argue a private grudge and enmity against him.

CONST. He has in general injured all men, but no man like me. For, not content with the death of my elder brother, he never ceased to stir up Constans of blessed memory to quarrels and hostility against me; which must have broken out into ill effects, if I, by a most invincible meekness and patience, had

not borne the powerful inclination both of him that was excited, and of him that excited him to that attempt. And, therefore, I account no victory so great, no, not that which I obtained over Magnentius and Silvanus, as I do the ejecting this wretched man out of all ecclesiastic administration.

LIB. I beseech you, sir, do not wreak your enmity upon the bishops; for the hands of ecclesiastics ought to be employed only to bless and consecrate. May it please you therefore to command that the bishops be recalled to their own sees, and if they shall be found to agree with him, who to this hour tenaciously adheres to the orthodox faith explained in the synod of Nice, then let them assemble and provide for the peace of the world, that so it may not appear that an innocent man is branded and condemned.

CONST. All that I require and command is, that you entertain communion with the churches, and return back to Rome. Yield, therefore, to peace, and subscribe, and then go home.

LIB. I have already taken leave of the brethren at Rome; for the laws of the church are dearer to me than an habitation at Rome.

CONST. I give you three days time to advise, whether you will subscribe and go back to Rome, or to consider of what other place you desire to be transported to.

LIB. It is not the space of three days or months that will make any alteration in my mind. Send me, therefore, whither you please.

VII. Thus ended the conference, wherein Constantius was superior in nothing but power and might, which seldom fails to carry the conclusion. Two days after, the emperor again called for Liberius, and finding him stiff in his resolution, decreed him to be banished to Berea, a city of Thrace. The good man took his leave, and being gone out, the emperor, either to mollify the sharpness of the sentence, or out of a generous compassion and respect to the condition and quality of the man, sent him five hundred pieces of gold to bear his charges.^c But he refused it, and bade the messenger restore them to his master, and desire him to give them to his soldiers, to his flatterers and needy

^c Πεντακοσίους δλοκοτίνουσ] δλοκότινος idem proculdubio erat cum solido aureo. Jam vero solidus aureus tempore Constantii (juxta calculum Brerewoodi nostri) valebat de nostro, 8s. 6d. ob. q^a. et 6-7 q.

courtiers, who were always craving, and never satisfied. The empress also sent him the like sum, which he returned with the like answer, adding, that if the emperor had no need of the money to pay his army, he might give them to Auxentius and Epictetus, (two Arian bishops that hung about the court,) who had need enough of them. When Eusebius the eunuch perceived that he had refused the imperial presents, he himself brought him one. To whom Liberius tartly replied, you have laid waste the churches throughout the world, and do you bring me an alms, as to a criminal person. Go your way, and first become a Christian. So, after three days, he took his journey towards Berea, where we leave him for a while, being likely to find him of another mind, when we shall next meet with him.

SECTION X.

THE CRUEL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST ATHANASIVS AND THE CATHOLICS AT ALEXANDRIA.

Severe edicts published against Athanasius. Respite granted by the governors, but not observed. The desperate attempts of the Arian faction at Alexandria under count Syrianus. The congregation set upon by armed multitudes; the horrible murders, outrages, and profanations committed at that time. The protestation of the people of Alexandria. Athanasius's escape into the wilderness. The persecution reinforced by count Heraclius. The extreme cruelties of that persecution. Great encouragement and rejoicing hereby given to the Gentiles. Immediate judgments upon some of the most forward zealots. George of Cappadocia ordained bishop of Alexandria by the Arians. This George, who; what his temper and former course of life. The time and place of his ordination. His arrival at Alexandria, and violent proceedings against the catholic party, without distinction of age, sex, person, or profession. The prodigious severities used throughout the neighbouring countries. Constantius's letter in commendation of the proceedings at Alexandria, and for a farther exposing of Athanasius. Athanasius's excellent converse with the monks and hermits in the wilderness, and their just veneration for him. What books he wrote at that time. His several apologies in his own defence. Persecuted into a more private part of the desert. The fabulous report of Rufinus, of his lying hid in a well; and of Palladius, that he dwelt six years in the house of a virgin. The mistake of a Greek historian of his being banished into England.

HAVING thus far represented the Athanasian cause, as acted upon the stage abroad, we must now step back a little, and see how the scene was managed nearer home. Long he had not quietly repossessed his episcopal throne, when, by subtle and malicious insinuations, Constantius's mind was again alienated

from him; who, having procured him to be condemned in the packed synods of Arles and Milan, published very severe edicts against him, and commanded that he should be killed wherever he could be met with.^d But before they proceeded to open rigours, they attempted him by secret and crafty artifices. And first Montanus the Palatine^e was sent to him, to try if he could put a trick upon him, and draw him into a voluntary recess from Alexandria. But that not succeeding, he was let alone for somewhat more than two years; when came Diogenes the notary, who, whatever he might set on foot by private counsels, had no public commission to proceed against him, nor so much as once offered to speak with him. After him came count Syrianus, commander of the army; a man, according to his profession, of a fierce bloody temper, who yet at first attempted nothing. But the Arian party bearing themselves high, and talking of what great things they would now do, the clergy and major part of the city came to Syrianus, and besought him, that no disturbance might be made, till they could send an embassy to the emperor. This, with great difficulty, he assented to, solemnly swearing to observe his promise. And the legation (if we may believe Sozomen^f) was actually sent, Athanasius despatching five bishops, (the chief whereof was Serapion bishop of Thmuis, a very pious and eloquent man,) and with them some of the presbyters; soon after whose departure came letters from the emperor, commanding Athanasius to repair to court, upon whose refusal, a messenger came the next year to force him thence. But of this Athanasius himself makes no mention, no, not in those places where he most solemnly vindicates himself from this charge, affirming more than once, how ready he was to have come, had he but received the least order from the emperor.

II. In the mean while Syrianus and the other governors began to be attended with crowds of the Arian faction, and cabals were held, and entertainments made in several places, which made Athanasius suspect that something more than fair dealing was intended. However they rested secure in Syrianus's promise, and the public assemblies were kept with great joy and thankfulness. When, behold, on a sudden, within less than a month after the security given, Syrianus, with a party of above five thousand soldiers, accompanied with great numbers of

^d Socrat. l. ii. c. 26.

^e Athan. Apol. ad Const. s. 19, etc.

^f Lib. iv. c. 9.

Arians, who had never ceased to instigate him to this attempt, broke into the church, where the people were met at their common devotions, in order to the holy communion that was to be administered the next day. It was night,^g and great numbers were assembled, and were intent at their holy offices, when, on a sudden, the church was full of drawn swords, spears, clubs, arrows, and other military furniture, which meeting with the darkness of the night, and the reflection of the lights in the church, conspired to heighten the amazement and consternation. Guards were also set round the church, that none might escape, and command given to begin the tragedy within, whereupon followed an innumerable slaughter, those of the holy order being some beaten, or chained, others killed, the devout virgins abused, rifled, and several of them slain, whose bodies for shame they cast into graves. Athanasius, who soon apprehended what the matter was, sat still in his chair, and not willing to desert his flock in this distress, called to the deacon to sing the hundred and thirty-sixth psalm, the people answering, "For his mercy endureth for ever." Which done, he commanded them to depart, and go to their houses. By this time the soldiers were advanced, and were coming to beset the quire, when the clergy and people that were about him, earnestly besought Athanasius to shift for himself; he on the other hand protesting he would not stir a foot, till they were all departed, and rising from his chair, passionately entreated them to be gone, affirming it to be much better, that he himself should be exposed to danger, than that any of them should be hurt. The people getting away as well as they could, the clergy and monks that were left, in a manner forced Athanasius along with them, whom (though almost stifled and crowded to death) they conveyed safe through all the guards, and secured him out of their reach. All things were full of terror and confusion, the church profaned with blood and dead carcases, with swords and arms, no reverence had either to persons or things, the soldiers rushing into those places where none but the holy order were permitted to enter; and when any complained, or prayed help of Syrianus against force and violence, they were rejected, and soundly beaten into the bargain: nay, he endeavoured to force the people to an acknowledgment, that

^g Athan. Apol. ad Const. s. 25. et Apol. de fug. s. 24. et protest. Pop. Alex. ad calc. Ep. ad Monachos.

no tumult had been raised, nor any hurt done; who so much the more complained that all this had been done without any order from the emperor, to whom they sent an account by some that were then going to court, beseeching Maximus governor of Egypt, and the rest of the governors, that they also would send despatches concerning it to the emperor; and that it might not fail, they obliged the masters of ships then ready to depart, to disperse the report of it in all places where they came, that so it might some way arrive at the emperor's ear. And after all, they entered their public protestation,^h wherein they give an account of the violence that had been offered, professing they were ready to suffer persecution, if it were the emperor's pleasure; but if not, they desired that they might live in quiet, and enjoy their bishop, without having any other imposed upon them. By which protestation it appears that this tragedy was on the 25th of February, anno 356.

III. Athanasius having thus happily escaped the hands of his enemies, retired into the wilderness, whence he determined to go in person to the emperor, and was now entered on his journey,ⁱ when hearing of the cruel and barbarous usage which his friends and followers every where met with, and despairing of success, he returned back to his shades and solitudes, where we shall again find him, and how he employed himself. No sooner was he departed, but count Heraclius comes with a warrant from the emperor to the senate and people of Alexandria,^j commanding them, upon their allegiance, with joint-force to persecute Athanasius. The man executed his edict with the utmost rigour, proclaiming it openly in every place, that it was the emperor's pleasure that Athanasius should be ejected, and the churches resigned up to the Arians; commanding the magistrates and respective officers, under great penalties, to see it done, and forcing even the Gentile priests and officers to approve his transactions, and to promise to own him for bishop whom the emperor should send; some for fear, others out of hopes of advantage engaging with him, for the performance whereof he took security under their own hands. With Heraclius joined Cataphronius prefect of Egypt, and Faustinus the treasurer, who were followed by a rabble, especially of the younger sort, and multitudes of Gentiles.

^h Ext. ad calc. Ep. ad Monachos.

ⁱ Apol. ad Const. s. 27.

^j Epist. ad Monachos. s. 54.

Their first attempt was upon the assembly met on Wednesday in the great church of the city,^k though it happening that the congregation being dismissed, the greatest part were gone; some few women only being left, whom, as they were rising from their devotions, they set upon with clubs and stones; the holy virgins they miserably beat, tearing their clothes, pulling off their head-attire, and kicking those that made resistance; and what was infinitely more intolerable to them than clubs or stones, grated their chaste ears with filthy and obscene speeches. Many young maids they forcibly took out of their fathers' houses; others they abused and affronted as they met them in the streets, stirring up the wild rabble to pull off their veils, and giving their own wives leave to abuse all they met; so that grave matrons were glad, as they met them, to step aside, and give them the way; who ran up and down like wild furies, accounting it a hard case, and a lost day, wherein they had not done some injury or mischief. Nor did the clergy fare better than the rest, the deacons and presbyters, yea and their friends and followers, were pulled out, banished, beaten, and some killed, and by a savage barbarity, not commonly known amongst men, their dead bodies torn limb from limb. So that all humanity seemed to be laid aside, and hell itself to be broken loose. They took Eutyelius, a sub-deacon, a man of approved integrity and fidelity, and having whipped him, till they had even driven his soul out of his body, were carrying him to the mines, and the worst part of them too, called Pheno, a place where the sturdiest malefactor is not wont to live many days, not giving him so much as an hour's respite for the dressing and curing of his wounds. But the good man was soon released out of their hands, for they had not gone far, when, unable to hold out, he dropped down and died. The people out of common compassion had interceded for him, but were rejected, and four of them, honest and substantial men, were apprehended for their pains, grievously scourged, and thrown into prison. And when the Arians, not satisfied herewith, murmured, and threatened to complain above, the commander, out of fear, gave order that they should be scourged a second time, the innocent men saying

^k Τετάρτη ἡν Σαββάτου; which Baronius, ad Ann. 356. num. 32. renders *quarta Sabbati ante Pentecosten*; for what reason I cannot imagine, unless he thought what was now done in Lent, had happened a little before Whitsuntide.

no more, than that "it is for the truth that we suffer, we cannot communicate with heretics; go on to beat us as much as you please, there will be a time when God will reckon with you for these things." And that they might wholly extinguish all sparks of charity and compassion, they suffered not the poor to be relieved; for whereas the poor widows and orphans that had formerly been sustained by the bounty of the church, were yet provided for by the kindness of pious and charitable persons, they now, by a new and unheard-of cruelty, indicted, prosecuted, and punished those who received the alms, as well as those that gave them. It were endless to tell of the houses that were broken open and rifled, the goods and provisions carried away, and divided amongst the soldiers; the tombs and monuments of the dead violated and spoiled, under a pretence of searching for Athanasius; the multitudes that were fined, and forced to take up money at interest to pay their ransom; others that fled from place to place, and at last were driven into the wilderness; others choosing rather to commit themselves to the mercy of the sea, than to fall into the hands of such merciless and bloody people.

IV. Nor did their rage extend only to the living, but even to senseless and inanimate things; they took the benches in the church, the episcopal chair, the communion table, the partitions, and whatsoever else they could bring away, and throwing them on an heap in the great street before the church-gate, set them on fire, casting frankincense into it: a day of triumph, of joy and jubilee to the Gentiles, who concluded, that surely the emperor and the Arians were coming over to them, and were so far elevated in their hopes and expectations, that they were upon the point publicly to set up their Pagan rites; for espying a beast drawing water for the gardens of the imperial palace, they intended it for a sacrifice, and had actually done it, but that it proved an heifer, which was not allowed by their sacrificial laws. And certainly had they not been fatally bent upon these mischievous proceedings, they met with some unhappy accidents, that one would have thought should have stopped their career. When they first broke into the church, a bold young fellow rushed into the quire, and insolently clapping himself down in the bishop's throne, sung a lewd obscene song through the nose, and rising up, caught the chair, with an intent to beat it all in pieces,

when a large splinter of it ran into his belly, and pierced his bowels, which presently began to flow out; and being taken up, and carried away, he died the next day. Another coming into the church with boughs in his hands, and waving them about after the Gentile manner, was immediately struck stark blind, and became insensible where he was, and being ready to drop down, was carried out; and after a day's time hardly recovered his understanding, being neither sensible of what he had done, nor of what had been done to him. These miraculous interposals of the divine Providence, though they had no good effect upon the Arians, who Pharaoh-like were hardened the more by every stroke, yet struck terror into the Gentiles, who became less forward to such profane attempts. And indeed to such an height did the cruelties of this persecution proceed, that the very Gentiles began to be ashamed of it; and could not but abominate the Arians as the most merciless inhuman butchers, persons that offered notorious violence to all those principles of kindness and tenderness that are natural and essential to mankind.

V. What had hitherto happened was but the beginning of sorrows, preparatory evils, to make way for the new-designed bishop. For it very much concerned them quickly to fill up the vacancy they had made, and to fix a trusty person in this great station of the church. And to this end they pitched upon one George, an inconsiderable fellow, but a man fit for the purpose, being (as Sozomen tells us^k) a busy man, and a prime stickler for the Arian cause. This George, (whom one, otherwise sufficiently versed in church story,^l by a prodigious and almost unpardonable mistake, makes the same with his Arian predecessor Gregory, most commonly called George in the Latin translation of Athanasius, condemned and deposed in the Sardican council, and to make good one mistake commits another, by more than once confounding him with George bishop of Laodicea; and the mistake so much the worse, because he himself so smartly and severely censures those,^m "who having taken a conceit against George the Arian, think presently that every George they meet with in discourse or reading, must be of Alexandria;") this George, I said, was born in Cappadocia, a country famous, even

^k Lib. iii. c. 7.

^l Heyl. Hist. of St. George, p. i. ch. 6. §. 6. p. 109. vid. §. 4. p. 106.

^m Ibid. §. 8.

in common speech, for the lewdness of its manners, and therefore one of the three proverbially noted with a *τρία Κάππα κάκιστα*; whence Athanasius once and again styles him, a man of Cappadocia; and Nazianzen (himself that countryman) calls him a Cappadocian monster,ⁿ that broke loose from the utmost confines of that country, and apologizes for his country for producing him;° impiety not being to be ascribed to the place, but the person, that thorns will spring up in the vineyard, and that a traitor was amongst the twelve disciples. St. Gregory of Nyssa calls him the Cappadocian Tarbasthenite,^p because born, I suppose, at Tarbasthenes, a poor village in Cappadocia; and Sozomen says most expressly,^q that he was τὸ μὲν γένος Καππαδόκης, a Cappadocian born. It is true, Ammianus Marcellinus tells us,^r that he was born in a fulling-mill at Epiphania, a town in Cilicia. But besides that those conterminous parts of Cilicia were anciently reckoned under the notion of Cappadocia taken at large, the historian vouches no other security for his assertion than mere report; whenas Nazianzen (who lived also at that time) may not only be reasonably presumed to understand better the affairs of his own country, but expressly declares, that he delivered those things not as rumours, or vain suspicions, but as matters of certain and accurate knowledge. Agreeable to his country were his temper and manners; a man (as that eloquent father goes on to decypher him) of a bad race, and worse qualities, of no consideration or account, sordidly educated, and of a rough and unaffable conversation; one that did not so much as pretend to religion, fit to undertake any villany, and to disturb affairs wherever he came; a detestable flatterer, that thrust himself upon great men's tables, and composed all his words and actions to promote no other designs than those of gluttony and excess. This servile temper recommended him to an employment in the state, first to be provisor general of pork for the army, (an office suitable to his sordid and swinish temper,) and then (if it were not the same employment) to be receiver of the stores at Constantinople,^s wherein he behaved himself so unfaithfully to his trust, prodigally wasting all upon his luxury, that he was forced to run for it, and, vagabond-like, wandered from place to place, till at last he was picked up and made bishop of Alexandria,

ⁿ Orat. xxi. p. 382.^o Ibid. p. 381.^p Contr. Eunom. lib. i. vol. ii. p. 294.^q Lib. iii. c. 7.^r Lib. xxii. c. 11.^s Athan. ad Monachos. s. 75.

where (as Nazianzen adds) he left off his rambling, and began his villanies, and whither he came like one of the Egyptian plagues. And indeed the heathen historian grants,[†] that the sending him thither was to the mischief and prejudice of a great many, and against his own, as well as the common good, as it was not like to be otherwise in a place so naturally prone to sedition, and apt to fly out into tumults, even when there is no just cause to provoke them to it. He was ordained to this place by a synod met at Antioch, Ann. Chr. 356, (for Sozomen,[‡] who relates the passage, plainly mistakes the time,) where were assembled Narcissus of Cilicia, Theodorus of Thrace, Eugenius bishop of Nice, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, Menophantus of Ephesus, and about thirty more; who wrote an encyclical epistle to the bishops of the several churches, to let them know, that Athanasius had, contrary to the canons, returned to Alexandria, having not been adjudged innocent by any synod, nor any other ways, but by the contentious proceedings of his own party; that therefore they entreated them to hold no communion with him, nor so much as to write to him, but to communicate with George, whom they had ordained in his room.

VI. He arrived at Alexandria about the end of Lent,[§] introduced and installed by a military guard, great crowds of people flocking to the church to behold this new and strange sight. He was attended and ushered in amongst others by Philagrius, (his countryman, a trusty friend to the Arians, and one who had heretofore more than once been employed upon the like errands,) who, probably, was again made prefect of Egypt to serve this turn. The Octaves of Easter being past, the wolf began to lay aside the sheep's clothing, and to shew himself in his own colours. For the people generally detesting communion with him, and assembling in the churches as they were wont, his friend Philagrius, with an armed multitude of Jews and Gentiles, and all the scum and refuse of the people, broke in upon them, and what miserable havoc they made it is easy to imagine. For now nothing could be seen but hurrying the sacred virgins to prison, committing bishops to the custody of men of war, forcibly breaking open and rifling the houses of widows and orphans, dragging persons out of their houses by night, and the

[†] Am. Marcell. l. xxii. c. 11.

[‡] Lib. iv. c. 8.

[§] Athan. de fug. s. 6. et Epist. Encyc. s. 2.

very brethren of clergymen faring ill for their relation-sake. On the week immediately after Whitsuntide, the people having ended their fast, were gone out into the church-yard to their devotions, being unwilling to communicate with George the bishop: which he no sooner understood, but he sent to Sebastian, captain of the guards, and by sect a Manichee, to repair thither with his company; which he did immediately, and finding that by this time of the day a great part of the assembly was gone, he made a violent assault upon the rest. He caused a fire to be made, to which he brought the holy virgins, and threatened to burn them, if they did not forthwith turn Arians. But when he perceived them constant and resolute in the faith, and to make light of the flames that were ready to devour them, he stripped them of their garments, and beat them so cruelly on the face, that for a long time after it was hard to know who they were. Forty men were so unmercifully handled with rods newly made, and the pricks yet upon them, that some of them very difficultly recovered after a tedious cure, and others, not able to bear up under it, died; the rest, that were not thus severely dealt with, were banished. As for the bodies of the slain, they all along denied them to their friends and kindred, but keeping them unburied, hid them, lest the world should be spectators of such barbarous indignities. Neither persons nor things were safe from rudeness and violence; virgins, priests, laics, were dragged up and down, haled before the bench of justice, fined, imprisoned, beaten, trampled on, and even trodden to death. Churches and fonts were set on fire, bibles burnt, and the communion-tables overturned and sacrilegiously abused. Jews and Heathens irreverently broke into the *baptisteria*, and putting off their clothes, profaned and defiled those holy places by words and actions not fit to be related. Nor were they afraid to sacrifice birds, and offer fruits upon the holy table, praising their idols, and blasphemously reproaching the Son of God.

VII. Thus, and much worse, it was in the city; nor was it better in the neighbour-countries.* The aged and reverend bishops were sure to smart for it, above thirty of them being banished, and near ninety turned out of their churches; which were immediately filled with Arians, and those taken either from

* Athan. ubi supr. et Apol. ad Const. s. 27.

amongst the catechumens, or civil officers; a great estate and zeal for Arianism being then qualifications sufficient to recommend any man to a bishopric. Together with the bishops were banished many of the inferior orders; and so cruel their treatment, without any regard either to their age or office, that some of them died by the way, others in the places of their banishment. At Barca,^y (which, by the way, Baronius^z makes the name of the person, whenas it is notoriously known it was a city of Libya,^a but more commonly called Ptolemais, and the Greek in Athanasius puts it past peradventure, that it was the name of a city,) Secundus, presbyter of that place, was by Secundus bishop of Pentapolis, and his co-partner Stephen, trodden to death, because refusing to comply with them, the poor man breathing out his soul with this pious and innocent charge, "Let no man revenge my death, I have a master that will do it, for whose sake I suffer all this." I shall wade no further in these tragical stories, so much to the shame and dishonour of human nature, much more of the principles of the Christian faith, it being true what he in Photius observes upon this account,^b that the bloody cruelties committed by this Arian bishop exceeded the greatest of the Heathen persecutions, which were humane and merciful, if compared to this. While they were engaged in these violent and barbarous proceedings, a letter came from the emperor,^c directed to the people of Alexandria, wherein he commends them for what they had done, that they had rejected and driven out Athanasius, a cheat (says he) and an impostor, a man broke loose from the very bottom of hell, who by little tricks and arts is wont to deceive the people; who being convict of the most notorious villanies, such as ten of his deaths could not expiate, durst not abide a legal trial, but ran away into voluntary banishment, where it is the interest even of the Barbarians to cut him off, lest he also inveigle them with his impieties; that they did well to adhere to the most reverend George, a person most admirably versed in divine things, and who would conduct them in the way to heaven; upon whose direction and counsel they should do well to depend, as upon a sacred anchor, to keep them safe from all winds of

^y Athan. ad Monachos. s. 65.

^z Ad Ann. 356. num. 45.

^a Strab. l. xvii. p. 837. Steph. in v. Βάρκη.

^b Cod. CCLVIII.

^c Ext. ap. Athan. Apol. ad Const. s. 30.

seduction and error. This is the sum of the letter, the truth whereof is evident at first sight. And that Athanasius might be secure in no place, he wrote to the barbarous countries to search him out, and deliver him up to the emperor's officers; and that both people and clergy should be compelled to embrace the Arian heresy, or in case of refusal be put to death. And because Athanasius had, some time since, ordained Frumentius bishop of Auxumis, and sent him to convert and christianize those nations, he despatched a letter to Aizana and Sazana,^d princes of that country, to require them to cause Frumentius to repair to Alexandria, to George and the rest of the bishops, that (as was fit) he might from them receive episcopal authority and ordination, and be rightly instructed in the faith and discipline of the church; otherwise it was evident that he still persisted in the cause and communion of wicked Athanasius, and consequently being seduced by his lewd discourses, not only God would be dishonoured, and the churches disturbed, but the whole country in danger of being overrun and brought to ruin.

VIII. While the storm fell thus heavy round about, God had provided Athanasius a secure shelter in the wilderness, where, in the midst of his solitary retirements, he enjoyed the pleasures of a very grateful conversation, the company of those pious and devout inhabitants of the desert, the primitive monks, a quite other sort of men from those who in these latter ages pass under that name and character; persons who, retiring from the world, lived wholly to God, and were entirely taken up in the most severe exercises of religion, a course wherein they had been trained up by Paul of Thebais, and Athanasius's kind friend St. Anthony, (who was still alive,) the two great founders of the monastic institution. There were two sorts of them,^e *Eremitæ* and *Cœnobitæ*; the first were wholly devoted to solitude, and conversed with none but God and themselves, and knew no more of the world than what they met with in the wilderness; the other kept together in societies, exercising mutual love and fellowship, and were hermits in the midst of populous cities, and led mortified lives amidst the noise and crowd, being a world to themselves, and by mutual conversation great examples and incentives to piety and virtue. With these our great man spent his time, reconciling in his own practice both the solitary and

^d Ext. *ibid.* s. 31.

^e Greg. Naz. Orat. xxi. p. 384.

the cœnobitic life ; shewing that the episcopal order could philosophize, and that philosophy itself needed episcopal direction ; both the contemplative and the active life met in him, and he convinced the world, that a monastic life consisted more in gravity and constancy of manners, than in an absolute separation from the world. And indeed with so great reverence and veneration did they entertain him, that whatever he commanded or disliked, was received by them as a law ; and when afterwards he was hunted as a partridge upon the mountains, they not only refused to tell the messengers where he was, but so much as to speak to them, exposing their necks to drawn swords for his sake, and accounting it a more sublime and heroic action to suffer for him, than to refine themselves by long fasting and abstinence, and other religious austerities, which yet they accounted the pleasure as well as duty of that place. To gratify the desires of these devout companions, and to do right to truth, he wrote that large epistle *τοῖς ἀπανταχοῦ τὸν μονήρη βίον ἀσκοῦσι*, “To the solitary ascetics that every where led a monastic life ;” wherein he gives them an account of his own and the church’s calamities, of the malicious arts, and bloody practices of the Arians, and what he and his friends and followers had suffered for the catholic cause, especially since the time of the Sardican council. He sent also consolatory letters to the holy virgins,^f to administer proper encouragements to them to undergo the sufferings that came upon them for their constancy to the truth ; but these are lost. And because his adversaries heavily charged upon him his retirement, as an evidence of his guilt, and the badness of his cause, he wrote an Apology for his Flight ; wherein he shews what cause they had given him so to do ; and that his withdrawing was warranted by the will of God, the reason of things, and the examples of wise and good men in all ages. This he backed with an Apology to the Emperor ; wherein he very particularly answers at large to all the material crimes that had been charged upon him ; assuring his majesty that he was most ready and desirous personally to have done it in his presence, and had begun his journey, when the evil tidings, that like Job’s messengers came flocking in, one still worse than another, made him retreat, and look upon the attempt as desperate. Some time after he wrote a second Apology for himself,

^f Theodor. l. ii. c. 14.

wherein he justifies his innocency from the public attestations and decrees of several synods that had been purposely held to that end in Egypt, at Rome, at Sardica, at Jerusalem, and by the testimony both of the emperor Constans and Constantius, all which he demonstrates out of public records, and the epistles themselves, which he there inserts.

IX. But the most unspotted innocency is not shield enough against the assaults of envy, nor can rocks and mountains afford a refuge and protection, where cruelty is inspired by an active malice. While Athanasius thus happily employed his vacant and retired hours, his enemies, encouraged by the severity of the emperor, (who had set a price upon his head,^g and commanded him to be brought either alive or dead,) diligently ransacked every place, and searched the very corners of the wilderness, threatening the monks with the utmost cruelty, if they did not discover him. This forced him to shift his quarters, and to retire to a more private and disconsolate place,^h where he had scarce air to breathe in, and where none came at him, but only one person, who brought him necessaries and conveyed letters to him. And well might it be a close place, were it true what Rufinus reports,ⁱ that for six years together he lay hid in a dry well, where he never saw the sun; and when at length betrayed by a maid, who alone was privy to his concealment, the officers came to search for him, he, upon a warning from God, had removed that very night, which so provoked the officers, that they punished the maid, as one that had abused them with a false report. Nay, we are told,^k that upon the danger of his being apprehended in the church at Alexandria, not knowing whither to retire, (it not being safe for him to go to any of his friends or relations,) he fled privately to the house of a young virgin, then not above twenty years of age, a person of such incomparable beauty, that good men were afraid to behold her, and of a temper no less adorned with divine graces and virtues: he told her his circumstances, and that by an intimation from heaven he had been admonished to come thither, as the only safe and unsuspected place. She bade him welcome, performing herself the

^g Rufin. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 18. Theodor. l. ii. c. 14.

^h Vid. Epist. ejus ad Lucif. Calar. inter Lucif. op.

ⁱ Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 18.

^k Pallad. Hist. Lausiac. c. 135. Sozom. l. v. c. 6.

meanest offices to him; and there he remained unknown to any for six years together, till the death of Constantius let him out; when, to the astonishment of all, he was unexpectedly found sitting in the church. These passages I have related, not that I give any credit to them, or advise the reader to believe them, but because delivered by writers who themselves lived in or near those times; nay, Palladius, bishop of Helenopolis, (the first reporter that I find of the story,) assures us, that he was acquainted with this very virgin, then seventy years of age, when he was at Alexandria, and that the whole clergy of the church attested the truth of her relation. Baronius thinks it was first framed by the Arians, to reflect disgrace upon Athanasius, and thence taken up by some unwary Catholics. Whether so or no, I cannot tell. Sure I am, were there nothing else to shake the credit of the story, this alone were enough, that not only Nazianzen, but Athanasius himself expressly assures us, that all that time he sojourned in the desert. Perhaps thus much of it might be true, (and that give birth to all the rest,) that Athanasius, affrighted with the great bustle and danger in the church, and not knowing where to retreat for safety, might for the present take sanctuary in the house of this virgin, and thence immediately escape into the wilderness. I cannot but here remark what Dorotheus, archbishop of Monembasia, (who wrote a synopsis of history in modern Greek,) relates,¹ that Constantius in the fifteenth year of his reign banished the great Athanasius *εἰς τὴν Ἑγλιτέραν*, that is, according to the phrase of his time, into England, and that one Felix was ordained in his room. Where, besides the error in point of chronology, two great mistakes are crowded into a few words. First, that Felix was ordained to be his successor, no such being ever bishop of Alexandria: secondly, that he was banished into England, a thing never mentioned by any but himself. I conceive him rather by a slip of memory, to have put Athanasius instead of Liberius, upon whose banishment, (not into England, but Thrace, as we have seen before,) Felix was thrust into the see of Rome. As for Athanasius, he sheltered himself at this present in the Egyptian deserts; where we leave him for a time to his devotions and studies, while we step out into the world to see how his cause fared abroad.

¹ Σύνοψ. διαφόρ. ἱστορ. p. σκδ'. ed. 1631.

SECTION XI.

THE STATE OF THE ATHANASIAN CAUSE, FROM THE COUNCIL AT SIRMIMUM
TILL THE SYNOD AT SELEUCIA.

A synod called at Sirmium, and a confession of faith drawn up. Subscriptions procured to it. An attempt upon Hosius bishop of Corduba. Hosius, who. The honours done him by Constantine the Great. His great authority amongst the Catholics. Constantius's letters to him to solicit his subscribing the condemnation of Athanasius. His bold and impartial answer, and banishment. Threatened and tortured into a subscribing the Sirmian confession. His releasement and return into Spain; the report of his violent proceedings against all that refused communion with him, founded upon what authority. His age, death, and character. The various divisions and subdivisions of the Arian tribe, and the chief heads of the several parties. Another synodal assembly at Sirmium. A second confession agreed upon, and drawn up, with the date of the consuls. Athanasius's witty remarks upon it. Constantius solicited in behalf of Liberius's release. Liberius persuaded and prevailed with to sign the last Sirmian confession. His letter to the Eastern bishops, testifying his consent and compliance with them. St. Hilary's sharp reflections upon that letter. Several other letters written by him to the same purpose. His return to Rome; repossession of his see; and death. The emperor's design of convening a more general council. Several places pitched upon for that assembly. A resolution to have two synods at the same time, one in the East, and another in the West, and why. A council summoned at Ariminum for the West. The number of bishops meeting there. The poverty of the British bishops. The late Sirmian confession rejected by the Catholics, who urge the condemnation of Arianism. The Nicene faith confirmed, and all opposite doctrines censured and thrown out. Ursacius, Valens, &c. deposed. An account of their synodal transactions transmitted to the emperor. The cold entertainment of their legates. The legates circumvented into a compliance by some about the emperor, but denied communion at their return. The fathers at Ariminum hardly used, and wearied out, to force them to a compliance. Valens's notorious shuffling, when pressed home by the synod. The council imposed upon by ambiguous terms and plausible pretences. The bishops afterwards severally repent, and retract their subscriptions.

CONSTANTIUS the emperor departing from Rome, (where he had lately been to celebrate a magnificent triumph for his victory over Magnentius,) lay at this time at Sirmium, anno 357, where the Arian bishops that were about the court, taking advantage of the emperor's presence, convene a synodal assembly, and study to smooth over things with fair pretences; that they were desirous to remove those things that might give offence on either side, and shew how much they were inclined to peace. And to this end they framed a new confession,^m wherein having premised,

^m Ext. ap. Athan. de Synod. s. 28. Hilar. de Synod. s. 11. Socrat. l. ii. c. 30.

that though they acknowledge one God the Father Almighty, and one only Son begotten of his Father before all worlds, yet they did not allow two Gods; they, amongst other things, declare, that because some were offended with the word *οὐσία* or substance, therefore that neither of these terms, *ὁμοούσιον*, consubstantial, nor *ὁμοιούσιον*, of like substance, should be used in common discourse, or be treated of in the church, both because the terms were unscriptural, and the things themselves above any human comprehension; that there could be no doubt, but that the Father was greater both in honour, dignity, brightness, majesty, and in the very title of Father, the Son himself testifying, “the Father that sent me, is greater than I;” that no man could be ignorant that this was catholic doctrine, that there are two Persons, one of the Father, and another of the Son; that the Father was the greater, the Son subject, together with all things which the Father had put under him; that the Father was without beginning, invisible, immortal, impassible; the Son born of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, whose generation none but the Father could understand; and that the number of the Trinity was entire and perfect. This was the sum of their declaration, whereto they designed to gain the subscriptions of some of the most eminent of the catholic party; and first they set upon Hosius, a man of renown, whom they partly ensnared, and partly compelled into a compliance with them.

II. This venerable prelate was bishop of Corduba in Spain, in which capacity he appeared, and subscribed in the eleventh place in the Illiberine council, held about the year 305. He had been a noble confessor even under the heathen persecutions, a person of singular account, and who had for many years been employed in the most important affairs and transactions of the church. He was peculiarly dear to Constantine the Great, who committed to his care the adjusting the difference between Cæcilian and Donatus of Carthage in the synod of Arles, anno 314; and sent him afterwards to Alexandria to compose the growing differences between Alexander and Arius; present soon after in the council of Nice, where he bore a prime stroke, and had a chief hand in drawing up the creed; called also to that of Sardica, where he was president of the council, and stoutly defended the Athanasian cause; indeed, a man of that great reverence

and authority, that he was at every turn styled Father Hosius, counted and called the father of bishops. The Arians knew well of what importance it would be to them, to have so considerable a person brought over to their party, or at least sent out of the way, and therefore addressing themselves to Constantius, represented to him,ⁿ that they had taken all courses that they could for the support and advancement of their cause; that they had banished Liberius, and many other bishops before him, and had filled all places with terror and violence, but that all this turned to no account, so long as Hosius was left in the way; that so long as he stood his ground, all others in a manner possessed their churches, being a person of that eminent ability and authority, that he alone was able to arm the whole world against them; that it was he that steered synods, and whose letters were received every where with an uncontrollable veneration; that it was he that had composed the Nicene faith, and every where proclaimed the Arians to be heretics; that therefore his majesty should do well to set upon him also, without any regard to his gray hairs, a nicety which their cause did not stick at. The emperor, easily persuaded by their insinuations, sent for him, and, as he had before done to Liberius, sought by fair and plausible counsels and arguments to persuade him to subscribe, and join with the Arians. The good old man was infinitely surprised, and troubled to hear the least motion made that way, for which he checked the emperor, and at length prevailed with him to desist, who accordingly gave him leave to return back into his own country. But his enemies did not leave him so, but again solicited the emperor, and by help of their friends, the eunuchs at court, so exasperated his mind, that he wrote him a sharp letter full of menaces and reproaches, which yet wrought as little upon him as promises and persuasives had done before. This letter was followed by several others, the emperor sometimes insinuating, and gently treating him as a father; sometimes threatening, and laying before him those that had been banished; letting him know how ill he took it, that he only should stand out. To which Hosius returned an answer to this effect:^o that he had been a confessor under the Maximian persecution, and was ready to be so again, rather than to

ⁿ Athan. ad Monachos, s. 42.

^o Ext. ap. Athan. ad Monachos, s. 44.

betray the truth; that he might hearken to him that was old enough to be his grandfather; that he had been present at, and privy to all the transactions of the Sardican council, where he had seen Athanasius openly challenge his adversaries, who retired with shame; that, like his brother Constans, he should lay aside force and terror, and suffer things to come to a fair and impartial trial; that he should remember that he himself was mortal, and ought to live under the awful sense of a judgment to come, and reserve himself undefiled against that day, and not thrust himself upon the determination of ecclesiastic matters; that for the case in hand, his resolution was this, that he would not join with the Arians, but would condemn their heresy; nor would he subscribe against Athanasius, whom he and the church of Rome, and a whole synod, had pronounced innocent, and to which his majesty himself had assented, having thereupon honourably remitted him to his own see; concluding thus, "Stop, I beseech you, sir, and be persuaded by me; for these are things which both become me to write, and you not to despise."

III. This resolute letter did but the more provoke the party, who told the emperor, that Hosius reflected upon him as a persecutor, and was so far from complying with his majesty's desires, that for Athanasius's sake he condemned the Arians, and persuaded others to suffer death rather than betray the truth, and that great numbers in Spain were of his mind. Amongst these accusers, Potamius,^p bishop of Odyssipona in Spain, was not the least, who, bribed with a rich farm, having heretofore become an apostate from the catholic party, owed Hosius an old grudge for discovering his villany, and reproaching him for an heretic, and therefore took this opportunity to pay him home. Hereupon he again sent for him, and confined him to Sirmium as the place of his banishment, where he remained a whole year, till Constantius at this time returned thither, who caused him to be cited into the synod,^q where the confession was offered him to subscribe, which he rejected at first, but being threatened, and severely handled, beaten, and racked, and not so well able to hold out by reason of his great age, (at this time an hundred years old,) and a little too tender of his dying carcase, (*nimum*

^p Faustin. Lib. prec. p. 13. ed. Oxon.

^q Athan. ad Monachos. s. 45. Faustin. ibid. p. 14. Soerat. l. ii. c. 31. Sozom. l. iv. c. 6. et 12. Philost. l. iv. c. 3.

sepulchri sui amans, as St. Hilary has it,^r) and, some say, being rich, and loth to be sent further into banishment, he yielded at last, and subscribed the confession, which, might we believe the title put to it by St. Hilary, was drawn up by him: Philostorgius adds, that he subscribed not only against the *ὁμοούσιον*, but against Athanasius; but Athanasius himself^s (who certainly best knew) assures us to the contrary, that though he communicated with the Arians, yet he did not subscribe against him. A great instance it was of human frailty, and how far a good man, after so many years resolute profession, after so many noble and undaunted conflicts both against heathens and heretics, may fall, when God leaves him to himself; which yet is the less to be wondered at in so feeble and decrepit an age, and under so much force and cruelty. And probable it is, he might hope, by this condescension, to mollify the stubbornness of the Arian faction, who could at no rate endure the word *ὁμοούσιος*, especially since it was no where to be found in scripture. Being thus released, and set right by the synodal letters, and especially furnished with a warrant from the emperor, that all bishops that refused communion with him should be banished, he returned into Spain, where, say my authors,^t he first fell foul upon Gregory bishop of Illiberis, who opposed him, whom by virtue of his warrant he caused Clementinus (who at that time, as the emperor's vicar, governed Spain) to bring before him. Great disputing there was between them, which Hosius perceiving would not put the matter to an issue, called to the governor to execute his warrant, and to banish him. Clementinus replied, he could not do it, till first he was deposed from his bishopric, and reduced to a private station. Which, when Hosius was resolved to do, Gregory appealed to heaven: "O Christ, (said he,) thou that art God, and who art coming to judge the quick and the dead, suffer not the sentence of man to be this day pronounced against thy servant, who for thy sake am, as a criminal, made a spectacle to the world; but judge now thyself, I beseech thee, in thine own cause, and vouchsafe by some instance of vengeance to determine the case. Which I request, not that I am afraid of banishment, any punishment for thy name's sake being acceptable and easy to me; but that others, seeing the immediate interposals of thy

^r De Synod. s. 87.^s Ad Monachos. s. 45. et Apol. c. Arian. s. 90.^t Faustin. et Marcell. Libel. prec. ubi supr. p. 14, etc.

vengeance, may be delivered from that error and prevarication whereinto they are ensnared." This said, Hosius, just as he was going to pronounce sentence, was stricken in a moment, his mouth distorted, his neck drawn awry, and, falling back from the bench to the ground, died. An accident that struck a strong terror and astonishment into all the beholders, and even into Clementinus himself, though an heathen governor. This unfortunate story I am not very willing to believe, though I must needs acknowledge it is related by Marcellinus and Faustinus, two presbyters, in their supplication to the emperor Theodosius, who lived at that time, and wrote this within less than thirty years after the thing was done, and for the truth of it appeal to all Spain, as a thing notoriously known. It is true they have hard words given them upon this account, and I am so far willing to grant, that their being of the Luciferian separation (who abominated all those that had but once communicated with the Arians, though they returned to the bosom of the church, for it is an unpardonable mistake in them that make Marcellinus to have been an Arian^u) might render them less impartial, and apt to make the worst of things. Certain I am, Athanasius expressly affirms,^v that Hosius upon his death-bed solemnly professed the force that had been used towards him, anathematized the Arian heresy, and gave charge that none should embrace or entertain it. He departed this life, as may probably be conjectured, anno 361, a little before the death of Constantius, after he had been above sixty years bishop of that see. I conclude his story with a double character and encomium, the one given him by all the fathers of the Sardican council,^w who style him "The good old Hosius, one who for his age, confession, and the infinite troubles he had undergone in the service of the church, was worthy of all honour and veneration." The other by Athanasius, "He was (says he^x) the great, the most illustrious confessor, truly Osius, i. e. Holy. What council did he not preside in, and who yielded not to his orthodox discourses? What churches have not admirable monuments of his care and patronage? Who ever came sad to him, that went not cheerful from him? Who ever begged any thing of him, which he did not easily obtain from him?"

^u Bivar. Comm. in Dextr. Chron. ad Ann. 360. p. 388.

^v Ad Monachos. s. 45.

^w Epist. Syn. ap. Athan. c. Arian. s. 44.

^x Apol. ad Const. de fug. s. 5.

All these passages we have here laid together, that we might present the account of this great man entire: which done, we now return.

IV. Error is not farther distant from truth, than it is multifarious and inconstant in its own nature, and apt to divide and separate from itself.^y The Arians all agreed in the main point, in opposing the catholic doctrine concerning the Son of God, but fell out amongst themselves, and each class divided and subdivided from one another. One sort would not allow him to be of the same, but only of a like nature and substance with the Father; a second affirmed him to be in all things like to the Father, but withal denied the Holy Ghost to have any communication of nature and essence either with the Father or the Son: which was the opinion of the Macedonians. Another decried the *ὁμοούσιον*, but yet affirmed that he was not a creature, as one of the creatures: and this way went Acacius bishop of Cæsarea, and his party. A fourth were for neither, but expressly asserted him to be *ἀνόμοιος*, (thence called Anomæans,) altogether unequal to and unlike his Father. And this was started by Aetius, made deacon by George of Alexandria, says Epiphanius, by Leontius of Antioch, say most others, (and perhaps both truly, for being first ordained deacon by Leontius, and after for his misdemeanors deposed, he might be again advanced to that degree by the other,) and in that capacity serving at this time in the church of Antioch, where he met with an opportunity to publish and propagate his notions. For about the time of the Sirmian convention, Eudoxius having usurped the see of Antioch,^z espoused the cause of Aetius, who, for his troublesome and contentious temper, had been rejected by his own party, especially by Leontius the former bishop. Eudoxius having got possession, convened a synod at Antioch, where he expressly condemned both the homoousian, and homoioussian terms, (as they had lately been in the conventicle at Sirmium,) and wrote to Valens, Ursacius, and Germinus, the chief heads of the party in that synod, to give them thanks for bringing over the Western bishops to their side. But a party in his own church (whom he had thrown out) made head against him, and having procured the recommendatory letters of George bishop of

^y Cyril. Hieros. Catech. vi. s. 8.

^z Sozom. l. iv. c. 2.

Laodicea, went to Ancyra in Galatia, where Basilius, the bishop, had at that time assembled many of the neighbour-prelates to the dedication of a church which he had lately built: who being satisfied with the letter, and the account they gave of his actings, and the confession he had published in the synod at Antioch, appointed Basilius and some others to wait upon the emperor, and acquaint him with the case, and to request of him, that all the synodal determinations might take place, that had defined the Son to be *ὁμοιούσιος*, of like substance with the Father. The emperor hereupon revoked the letter which he had just then given to Asphalius, Eudoxius's legate, and sent a smart epistle to the church of Antioch,^a to let them know, that he had never sent Eudoxius to be their bishop, nor would ever favour such; that he was resolved to crush Aetius and his followers, and that they should thrust them out of all public assemblies; and that they had no other way to save themselves, but by recovering themselves out of the snare of the devil, and by consenting to those determinations which the wise and holy bishops had regularly agreed upon. And by this means the Anomæan heresy was stopped for the present.

V. It was the year 358, and the court was still at Sirmium, where the Eastern legates,^b together with the rest of the bishops that were about the court, held a synodal convention, wherein pretending that some went about to establish their own errors, under pretence of the word "consubstantial," they passed and ratified a new confession, made up of a former Sirmian confession against Photinus,^c and the old dedication-creed at Antioch blended together, and which, it is like, was the same with that which Basilius and his synod had framed some few months before at Ancyra against Eudoxius and his party. But nothing rendered this confession so famous, as that in all probability it was that which was subscribed by pope Liberius; it being evident, beyond all dispute, (both from the earthquake at Nicomedia, the date of Felix and Liberius's death, and other circumstances,) that it was this year, viz. anno 358, that Liberius subscribed at Sirmium, and was released from banishment. He had been now almost three years in exile, and plain it is, from the note written

^a Ext. Ap. Sozom. l. iv. c. 14.

^b Sozom. ibid. c. 15. Vid. c. 13. et Vales. Annot. p. 125. confer. Philost. l. i. c. 8.

^c Ext. supra sect. viii. §. 11.

with his own hand at the end of his letter to Vincentius,^d that he was heartily weary of his exile, and that his desire to return had a considerable influence upon his subscribing. And as for Constantius, he was pretty well disposed towards it. At his last being at Rome,^e the noble and great ladies had desired their husbands to petition the emperor for his restitution, threatening, that unless this was done, they would leave them, and go to their bishop. But the men apprehending the danger of the attempt, put the women upon it, as who might safest undertake it. And they accordingly, with great pomp and gallantry, made their address, and presented their petition; to which the emperor answered, that the city was already well provided for, Felix, who succeeded Liberius, being a moderate man, who adhered to the Nicene faith, and yet did not superciliously exclude others from communion. However he gave them no denial, intending to compromise the business between the two bishops. And being now at Sirmium, and a plausible confession, as he thought, agreed on, he resolved to send for Liberius,^f and that at a time when the legates, both of the Eastern and Western bishops, were at court, the prelates of the East earnestly exciting the emperor to make him subscribe the homoiousian creed. It seems at first he stood off, till threatenings and force were used,^g and then he came over and subscribed; Sozomen expressly telling us, that it was part of the confession he was forced to, that the Son is not con-substantial, but that in substance and in all things he is like to his Father; and that Eudoxius and the Aetians gave it out at Antioch, that he had likewise condemned the *ὁμοούσιον*, and declared the Son to be unlike the Father: which they did to give life to, and to keep up the reputation of their sinking cause. But preparatory hereunto, and before his coming to court, he had been dealt with by Demophilus and Fortunatian, (sent to him no doubt by the emperor's order,) who plied him so successfully, that he gave his consent, and began now more freely to declare himself; and first he wrote a letter to the Eastern bishops,^h which, together with St. Hilary's censures, (thrown into the margin,) we here insert.

^d Ext. ap. Hilar. fragm. vi. s. 10, 11.

^e Theodor. l. ii. c. 17.

^f Sozom. l. iv. c. 15.

^g Athan. ad Monachos. s. 41. Vid. Sozom. loco cit.

^h Ext. ap. Hilar. fragm. vi. s. 5.

“ To my dear brethren, the Presbyters and Bishops of the East, Liberius greeting.

“ Having had the fear of God before your eyes in your proceedings, your holy faith is known both to God and good men, according as the law speaks, ‘ Judge righteously, O ye sons of men.’ For my part, I did not defend Athanasius, but forasmuch as my predecessor Julius of happy memory had entertained him, I was afraid lest any one should judge me to prevaricate. But as soon as I understood what it had pleased God should come to pass, that you had justly condemned him, I immediately gave my assent to your determinations, and wrote letters concerning him,ⁱ which I gave to our brother Fortunatian, to be carried to the emperor Constantius. Athanasius therefore being shut out of communion with all of us, from whom I intend not to receive any letters, I declare, that I have peace and unanimity with you all, and with all the bishops in the East, or in any other provinces. And that you may be the better satisfied that it is the true belief which I declare by this epistle, our common brother Demophilus has been pleased, according to his wonted kindness, to open to me the true and catholic faith treated of, expounded, and received by all our brethren and fellow-bishops that were present at Sirmium.^k This faith I freely and willingly receive without any contradiction,^l to this I have yielded my consent, this I follow, this I maintain.^m And now I have thought good to beseech your holiness, that forasmuch as you see that I am in all things of the same mind with you, you would vouchsafe by common advice and study to promote my being released from banishment, and that I may return to the see which heaven has committed to me.”

Next he wrote particularly to Ursacius,ⁿ Valens, and Germinius, whose interest he knew swayed much at court, to the same purpose, declaring his detestation of Athanasius, that he held communion with them, with Epictetus and Auxentius, and others, entreating them to improve their interest for his restitu-

ⁱ That is, his condemnation. *Hilar.*

^k This is the perfidious false Arian faith. This is my note, not the apostate's. *Hilar.*

^l I denounce an anathema to thee, Liberius, and to thy fellows. *Hilar.*

^m Again, and a third time, an anathema to thee, thou prevaricator Liberius. *Hilar.*

ⁿ Ext. ap. Hilar. fragm. vi. s. 8.

tion, concluding, that whoever dissented from this peace and concord, should be cut off from his communion: which St. Hilary seals up, with “an anathema from me to the prevaricator of the Arians.” He wrote likewise to Vincentius bishop of Capua,^o to let him know that he had deserted the Athanasian cause, and was gone over to the Orientalists; and that peace being now restored to him, he desired him to assemble the bishops of Campania, and to acquaint them with these matters, and that they would despatch some of their number with a letter to the emperor; that he being satisfied in the peace and unity between them, he might be delivered out of that uncomfortable condition wherein he was; adding this note at the bottom, “I have peace with all the Eastern bishops, and with you; I have acquitted myself to God, look ye to it, if you have mind I should end my days in banishment. The Lord judge between me and you.”

VI. Abundant satisfaction being thus given, he came to Sirmium, and upon his subscription was received, released, and restored; the bishops writing to Felix bishop of Rome,^p and to the clergy there, that they should receive Liberius, and that both should quietly sit in the apostolic throne, and all things done in Liberius's absence be buried in oblivion. Herewith Liberius returned to Rome, which he entered in a kind of triumph; and though Baronius,^q out of the pontifical book, tells us, that at his return, the people of Rome rejected him for his Arian compliance, and shunned communion with him, and that a very severe persecution was thereupon raised in the city: yet others,^r who lived in those times, tell us another story; that at his return, the people of Rome went out to meet him with great joy; and when (as Theodoret informs us^s) the emperor's letters were read in the circus, commanding that he and Felix should jointly carry on the affairs of that church, and the two different factions of the circus required, that one might have one bishop and another the other, the people unanimously cried out, “one God, one Christ, one bishop.” My authors add, that Felix, either by the senate or people, was driven out of the city, and a little after, at the instigation of some perjured clergymen, (who had sided with him contrary to their oath given at Liberius's de-

^o Ext. ap. Hilar. fragm. vi. s. 10. ^p Sozom. l. iv. c. 15. ^q Ad Ann. 357. num. 57.

^r Marcell. et Faustin. Præfat. ad Libel. prec. Vid. Hieron. Chron. ad Ann. Chr. 350.

^s Lib. ii. c. 17.

parture, that they would admit no bishop in his room,) returned, and kept public meetings in Julius's church beyond Tiber, whom the nobility and people did immediately cast out again with infinite disgrace; that Felix survived Liberius's return eight years, dying November 22, anno 365; after whose death Liberius absolved the perjured and schismatical clergy, who restored them to their proper offices; and the next year ended his own life, September the 24th, anno 366. Though before his death we may hope he saw his error, and returned to a better mind, which seems more than probable from the account of his faith in these important articles, which he sent to Athanasius, yet extant in Athanasius's works,[†] if at least, as Baronius will have it, (for which yet he offers no convincing argument,) that profession was made after Liberius's apostasy to the Arian party.

VII. How infinitely mutable and inconstant is error! The emperor, by turns, continuing still at Sirmium, the next year, anno 359, the bishops were again convened, where they agreed upon a new form or confession of faith, drawn up by Mark bishop of Arethusa, and by him dictated no doubt in Greek, though Socrates says it was translated out of Latin. It ran thus: "

" The catholic faith, expounded and published in the presence of our lord, the most religious and incomparable emperor Constantius, the august, eternal, at Sirmium, May the 22d, the most excellent Flavius Eusebius and Hypatius being consuls.

" We believe in one only and true God, the Father Almighty, Maker and Creator of all things, and in the one only begotten Son of God, begotten of God impassibly before all ages, and before all beginning, before all time that can be imagined, and before any comprehensible conception; by whom the worlds were framed, and all things made; the only begotten, begotten alone of the Father alone, God of God, like to the Father that begat him, according to the scriptures: whose generation none knows, but the Father only that begat him. This we know to be the only begotten Son of God, who by his Father's appointment came down from heaven for the destruction of sin, was born of the Virgin Mary, and conversed with his disciples; and having

[†] Vol. ii. p. 668.

^u Ext. ap. Athan. de Synod. s. 8. Socrat. l. ii. c. 37.

accomplished his whole economy according to his Father's will, was crucified, and died, and descended into hell, where he finished what yet remained, and where the keepers of that place trembled at his presence. He also rose again the third day, and conversed with his followers; and having spent forty days, was taken up into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father, and shall come again at the last day, in the glory of the Father, to render to every one according to his works. And in the Holy Ghost, whom Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, promised to send as a Comforter to mankind. As it is written, 'I go to my Father, and I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth; he shall take of mine, and shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance.' But as for the word *substance*, it having been used by the fathers in a more simple and harmless sense, and not being understood by the people, and since it is that whereat many take offence, as not being found in scripture, we have therefore thought good that it should be quite laid aside, and that henceforth, when any discourse is concerning God, no mention should be made of it, the holy scripture never making mention of the substance of the Father and the Son. As to the Son, we affirm him to be in all things like unto the Father, according as the sacred scriptures do assert and teach."

To this confession of faith they add, we see in the inscription, (what was never before heard of in the church of God,) the imperial titles, and the date of the consuls, and the day of the month. A tacit acknowledgment to all wise and understanding men, (as Athanasius wittily retorts upon them,^x) that their faith was none of the ancients', and took its date only from the reign of Constantius. And whereas (says he) they pretended to write concerning our Lord, instead of him, they adopted another lord, to wit, Constantius; and they who refused to own the Son of God to be eternal, yet made no scruple to give that title to the emperor. As for the body of the creed, they peremptorily declare (what in some of their late confessions they had damned and rejected) that the Son is in all things like unto the Father, and that this was the plain and current doctrine of the gospel.

^x Athan. de Synod. s. 2.

VIII. The troubles of the church still increasing, notwithstanding all the methods that had been used to allay them, the emperor (who it seems was newly removed to Singidunum, a town in Mysia) was forced to think of composing things by a more general council; and as Philostorgius tells us,^y by the advice of Patrophilus bishop of Scythopolis, and Narcissus of Irenopolis, who were come to court to make complaint against Basil of Ancyra, it was resolved that a synod should be holden at Nicomedia.^z But a terrible earthquake (wherein amongst others Cecropius bishop of that place perished) having there shattered all in pieces, the bishops who were upon their journey were commanded to stop and go no farther, till the emperor, having advised with Basil, appointed Nice to be the place: a city the rather pitched on (as Theodoret will have it^a) that they might take advantage of the name, and that their assembly might be styled the council of Nice, whereby it would be no hard matter to impose upon simple and unwary minds, as if theirs were the true Nicene faith. But the earthquake having reached hither also, and left behind it sad monuments of its rage and violence, spoiled that design: whereupon the emperor changed his mind, and wrote to Basil, to consult with the Eastern bishops, what place was most fit for the synod to meet at. But they not agreeing, Basil himself went to the court at Sirmium, where he met with Mark of Arethusa, and George bishop of Alexandria. The next place thought on was Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, (St. Paul's birth-place,) but neither did this give satisfaction. At last a new project is resolved on, that the council should be divided, and that at the same time a synod should be holden for the West at Ariminum a city of Æmilia in Italy, and another at Seleucia a city of Isauria, called the Sharp, for the East. The emperor hoping, that as by this means the journeys being shortened, the bishops would be more willing to come; so counsels being divided, they would the easilier agree, and those heats and feuds be prevented, which were otherwise likely to arise between such contending parties, and in so great a mixture of such different nations. Letters of summons were forthwith given out, with command to the prelates of each council, that they should first handle and agree matters of faith, and then proceed to discuss the causes of the bishops that should come before them; which

^y Lib. iv. c. 10.^z Sozom. l. iv. c. 16.^a Lib. ii. c. 26.

being ended, they should send ten of each party to court, to give the emperor an account of what was done.

IX. At Ariminum there met above four hundred;^b nay, if we may believe the partial account of Hunnericus king of the Vandals, in his edict against the catholic bishops of Africa,^c above a thousand prelates. It is certain they were a great number, being convocated *ex omni orbe Romano*, (as the edict of the younger Valentinian informs us,^d) from all parts of the Roman empire, though not many of the Eastern bishops were there; the main body of the council consisted of Western prelates, Taurus the governor having despatched officers with particular summonses into all the provinces of the West, and was commanded not to suffer them to depart home till they had agreed in one uniform confession of faith, with promise, that if he brought it about, he should be honoured with a consulship for his pains. He had orders also to allow the bishops provisions of meat and wine at the emperor's charge: which was refused by them of Aquitaine, Gaul, and Britain, who chose rather to live at their own charge. Three only of our British bishops, who were poorer than the rest, accepted of the public allowance, refusing the maintenance which their fellow-bishops offered them, accounting it more reasonable to burthen the exchequer, than private and particular persons: which though some quarrelled at, yet the historian honestly makes their defence,^e that it was a sign of ancient virtue and piety, for bishops to be found so poor, and that it was much better to be beholden to the exchequer, where they would not be burthensome to any. Being met, they could not at first agree to sit together, the Catholics assembling in the church, the Arians (who were not above eighty) in a chapel or oratory, though, probable it is, they soon joined, at least held correspondence with each other. At their coming together, the Arians declined all meddling with the case of Athanasius,^f and so they proceeded to discuss matters of faith. And when several things were propounded and debated, Ursacius and Valens, backed by the rest of the Arian party, stood up and made a motion, that since the minds of men

^b Sozom. l. iv. c. 17. Sulp. Sev. l. ii. c. 41.

^c Ap. Vict. Vit. de persecut. Afric. l. iv. c. 2.

^d Cod. Theodos. Lib. xvi. Tit. i. l. 4.

* Sulp. Sev. l. ii. c. 41.

^f Socrat. l. ii. c. 37. Sozom. l. iv. c. 17. Athan. de Synod. s. 8, etc.

were greatly distracted with diversities of creeds, all forms hitherto published might be abolished, and that the confession that had been drawn up in the late synod at Sirmium might be received and settled as the common and universal standard ; that the emperor had approved it, and that the council could not but accept it ; that curious inquiries about these matters begat disputes, and they feuds and quarrels, and that it was better to have right notions of God, though we arrived at them by more unskilful ways of reasoning, than introduce novel expressions, of near affinity with mere subtleties of logic ; that the term “ consubstantial ” was to many obscure, and wholly a stranger to scripture, and that it was far better, in the room of it, to say, with the holy scriptures, “ that the Son is in all things like his Father.” This said, they caused the confession (which they held in their hands) to be read before the council, which the Catholics had no sooner heard, but they cried out, “ We came not hither because we wanted a form of faith, we have one which we have received from our ancestors, and which we preserve entire. If you have composed this, as now only beginning to believe, you are not yet within the holy order, not having yet learned the rudiments of your faith ; but if these things have nothing novel in them, then openly anathematize Arianism, as it has been the ancient rule and way of the church, to reject other heresies as impious ; for that this blasphemous doctrine of Arius has done nothing but raise seditions and confusions, from its first commencement to this day, is too manifest to the world. If, therefore, ye be come with the same minds that we are, let us unanimously agree, let us condemn and accurse heresies, and adhere to the constitutions of our forefathers, that so we may cut off all occasions of future synods upon this account, the fathers of Nice having done all that is necessary in this case for the catholic faith.”

X. Before they had proceeded any further, a letter came to them from the emperor,^g commanding to define nothing concerning the Eastern bishops, who were assembled elsewhere, and that if they did, it should signify nothing, for that he would not suffer it to take place. This order they complied with, till perceiving the falsehood and treachery of the other party in their

^g Ext. ap. Hilar. fragm. vii. s. 1, 2.

conventions, they found it necessary to confirm the Nicene creed, which they did, by publishing a definitive sentence,^h which they all subscribed; wherein they professed that they ought not to recede from the Nicene faith, (which contained the ancient faith dictated by God to the prophets and apostles, and from them successively handed down by the fathers,) to which nothing should be added, from which nothing should be diminished, and the word *substance*, both as to name and thing, should remain unshaken. Next they explicitly condemned the Arian doctrines in several propositions,ⁱ wherein they particularly struck at the very root and vital parts of the Arian heresy. Lastly, they censured and deposed Ursacius,^k Valens, Germinius, Auxentius, and Caius, as obstinate heretics, as corrupters of, and implacable enemies to the council, and the faith of Nice. This being done, they wrote an account of all to the emperor,^l beseeching him that no innovations might be made in the faith, but that things might remain as they had been settled in the time of his blessed father, and that he would please to give the bishops (many of whom were poor and aged) leave to return to their several churches, to take care of the people committed to their charge, and to join with them in prayers for the happiness and prosperity of his reign. This letter they sent by ten of their own body, men of honest minds, but unexperienced in the arts and subtleties of business, especially in the affairs of courts; and as many the Arians sent on their part, persons of age and experience, of wit and dexterity, and who had been trained up in the methods of craftiness and deceit. But Ursacius and Valens having got the start, and coming to court before the rest, had so possessed the emperor's mind with prejudices against the proceedings of the council, that when the legates arrived, they were not admitted to the emperor's presence, but were wearied with delays, the courtiers pretending the emperor was taken up with more important affairs. But that he might not seem wholly to neglect them, he wrote to them to excuse his not having conversed with the legates;^m that matters of that nature required a mind free

^h Ext. ap. Hilar. *ibid.* s. 3.

ⁱ Ext. ap. Hilar. *ibid.* s. 4.

^k Ext. *Sententia Synod. ap. Athan. de Synod.* s. 11.

^l Ext. *Epist. ap. Athan. ibid.* s. 10. *Socrat. l. ii. c. 37.* *Theodor. l. ii. c. 19.* *Hilar. fragm. viii. s. 1.* *Sozom. l. iv. c. 18.*

^m Ext. ap. *Socrat. l. ii. c. 37.*

from the distractions of public business, which he could not have at this time, being ready for an expedition against the barbarous people; that therefore he had commanded them to stay at Adrianople till his return, when he would take an account of their message, and send them back, and that they should not think much in the mean time to wait their coming back. The synod, little satisfied with this message, writ back an answer to the emperor,ⁿ that they could by no means recede from what they had done, and that they had given the same in charge to their legates; that they once more besought his majesty to let them go home, that they might depart before the winter grew too far upon them, which would render their return extremely difficult and uneasy to them.

XI. The emperor being now at leisure, the legates are called for,^o and being circumvented by crafty but fair pretences, were told, that the difference was not great, consisting only in one word, a thing not worth contending about; that the word *substance*, which was the great bone of contention, was ambiguous, and had been rashly taken up by the fathers without any authority from the scripture; and that the true faith was, that the Son was like the Father, (though therein lay a pernicious fallacy, they owning him to be like indeed, but not equal to the Father.) With these and some other artifices, the legates were prevailed with to consent to them, and to communicate with the Arians; after which they were dismissed, and orders sent to Taurus, the prefect, not to suffer the synod to break up, till they had all yielded to the prescribed form, and that they who stood out should be all banished, till there were not above fifteen left. The legates returning, were denied communion, though they pleaded the force that had been put upon them. But the Arians growing more confident by this success, the catholic fathers, partly not seeing to the bottom of things, partly tired out with their tedious stay, came over to an agreement with the Orientalists, not above twenty being left that made good their ground, of whom Phæbadius, bishop of Ageu in France, was chief. These Taurus besought with the most passionate importunities to yield; they had been now seven months shut up in the city, that they were almost starved by the scarcity and hardship of the winter, and that otherwise there could be no hopes of their departure;

ⁿ Ext. ap. Socrat. l. ii. c. 37. et Theodor. l. ii. c. 20.

^o Sulp. Sev. l. ii. c. 43.

that they should follow the example of the most, whom they ought to think wiser than a few. Phæbadius for a while could not be wrought upon, till at last a temper was found out, that he and his party should have liberty to add their explication to the confession, which they did, and therein condemned Arius, and some of his main propositions, though, after all their caution herein, they were craftily overreached and imposed upon. Indeed, the whole affair was transacted and carried by the artifice and dissimulation of Valens of Mursa, who, before the whole council,^p publicly professed that he was no Arian, and that he abhorred their blasphemies. Whereupon Musonius, bishop of Byzacium, a man revered by all for his age, moved the synod, that the impious assertions charged upon Valens might be read and censured by the council: which was accordingly done by Claudius of the province of Picenum. Upon reading the paper, Valens stormed, and declared the assertions were none of his, and to clear himself cried out, whoever denies that Christ the Son of God was begotten by the Father before the world, let him be accursed. Whereto the council unanimously added their *placet*. He goes on, Whoever denies the Son to be like the Father according to the scriptures; or that affirms the Son of God not to be eternal with the Father; or that shall say, the Son of God is a creature, as are the rest of the creatures; or that he arose out of nothing, and not of the Father; or that there was a time when he was not a Son, let him be accursed. To all which propositions he denounced a particular anathema, the synod also adding their suffrage to each of them. Several other questions Claudius put to him, whereof he purged himself, and this amongst the rest; whoever shall affirm that the Son of God was indeed before all ages, but not before all time, (this being a fallacy under which the Arians used to shelter themselves,) let him be accursed: which was universally assented to, and all were pleased with his candid and full confession, so that they extolled him to the skies, and blamed themselves that they had suspected him. And yet all this while there was a snake in the grass, which they saw not, he having cunningly shuffled in this proposition amongst the rest, "that the Son of God was not a creature like the rest of the creatures:" the sting whereof (though they did not then discern it) lay in this, that the denying the Son to be like the

^p Hieron. adv. Lucif. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 299, 300.

rest of the creatures, did however necessarily infer him to be a creature, though in a more sublime and excellent capacity than the rest. And as for the word *substance*, it being cried out against as an unscriptural term, and that which by its novelty had given great offence, the unwary fathers consented to lay it aside, not reckoning it worth while to contend about words, so long as they thought themselves secure of the sense. The issue was, both parties rested satisfied, the Arian confession carried the day, and was published abroad as the determination of the council of Ariminum. And plain it is throughout the whole course of the story, that the Arians mightily bore up themselves upon the reputation and authority of this synod, which at every turn they opposed to the great council at Nice,⁹ and thought it weighty enough to be laid in the balance with it. The synod being ended, Ursacius and his party going for the East,^r stayed a while at Nice, a city in Thrace, where they synodically convened, and translating the confession passed at Ariminum into Greek, ratified it anew, and published it, giving out that this faith published at Nice, was dictated and drawn up by an oecumenical council; that so unwary people being imposed upon by the name of Nice, might think this to be the creed composed by that great synod of Nice. But the imposture was soon found out, and the attempt exploded by all as foolish and ridiculous. Nor did the triumph of the conquest, which they had gained at Ariminum, last long. For the catholic fathers,^s however imposed upon at present, were no sooner returned home, but they saw their error, and retracted what they had agreed to in that council, confessing with tears, they had been overreached by fraud and subtlety, and that they little suspected but men's minds and tongues had agreed together. I shall remark nothing further concerning this synod at Ariminum, than that they took upon them not only to discuss matters of faith, but to settle privileges upon the clergy and their churches, particularly ordaining, that the carriages belonging to any church should be exempt from public service,^t and should be liable to no molestation. But this Constantius soon

⁹ Vid. August. Max. Arian. l. iii. c. 14. s. 3. vol. viii. p. 704.

^r Socrat. l. ii. c. 37. Sozom. l. iv. c. 19.

^s Vid. Epist. Synod. Damas. ap. Theodor. l. ii. c. 22. Sozom. l. vi. c. 23. Hieron. adv. Lucif. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 300. Ambros. Epist. xxi. ad Valentin. s. 15.

^t Vid. Cod. Theodos. lib. xvii. Tit. ii. l. 15.

after took away, and perhaps was not well pleased that they had taken so much upon them.

SECTION XII.

THE ACTS OF THE SYNODS AT SELEUCIA AND CONSTANTINOPLE.

The time and place of the council at Seleucia. Things propounded to be transacted in the synod. Two different parties in the council. The Acacians contend for the abolishing the Nicene creed. Opposed by the other party, who dislike nothing but the word "consubstantial." Leonas, the emperor's lieutenant, sides with the Acacian faction. Acacius surprises the synod with a confession of faith, subscribed by all the bishops of his party, which Leonas commanded to be read. This confession canvassed and debated. The creed of Antioch resolved on. The Acacians refuse to come any more to the council, and are deposed by the synod; but fly to Constantinople, and make an interest at court, before the arrival of the synodal legates. A synod procured in the imperial city. Basil of Ancyra challenged by Aetius to a disputation. The Semiarians press hard upon the opinions of Aetius and Endoxius at a hearing before the emperor. Aetius banished. His doctrine unwillingly condemned by Eudoxius. Sylvanus and his party condemned and banished. A synodal epistle sent to George of Alexandria concerning the condemnation of Aetius. This subscribed by the followers of Aetius in a convention at Alexandria. The confession of Ariminum, with some few additions, ratified by the synod at Constantinople. Constantius's removal to Antioch; a synod holden there to damn the "consubstantial" doctrine. Meletius chosen to the see of Antioch. The good opinion all parties had of him. He heartily declares himself for the catholic faith, to the great vexation of the Arians. His sermon at Antioch to that purpose. His banishment. Another synod at Antioch procured by Acacius against Eudoxius. Constantius's resolution of having controversies once more decided in a more public council, but is prevented by death. His sickness, death, and character.

BUT it is time we should look towards the East, and inquire what was done in the synod at Seleucia, contemporary with that of Ariminum, where, in the church dedicated to St. Tecla, the virgin-martyr, were assembled to the number of about one hundred and sixty prelates, (though others make it less by ten,) all the bishops of the East, and of the Asian and Pontic diocese, being summoned to the council, whither also the emperor sent Leonas, treasurer of the palace, to be present at all debates in matters of faith, and Lauricius, president of Isauria, to be assistant to the fathers in what they needed. Socrates, from Sabinus's Collections of Synodal Transactions,^u has given us a particular account of the acts of this council, whose footsteps we

^u Lib. ii. c. 39. Sozom. l. iv. c. 22. Theodor. l. ii. c. 26.

shall briefly follow. On the 27th of September, anno 359, the council was opened; when Leonas told them, that every one had liberty to propound what he pleased: but they refused as yet to enter upon the most important matters, pretending that several whom they expected were not yet arrived, as indeed Macedonius of Constantinople, Basil of Ancyra, and some others, had, upon pretence of indisposition or the like, excused themselves, not knowing what might be moved in the synod against them. And when, notwithstanding Leonas urged they should proceed, they answered, that they could propound no questions, till first they had examined the case of those bishops that were accused. So that they could not agree what first to discuss, whether matters of faith, or the accused bishops; and to this confusion the emperor's letters did not a little contribute, sometimes commanding the one, and sometimes the other. The issue was, the council divided into two parts; the one headed by Acacius bishop of Cæsarea, George of Alexandria, Uranius of Tyre, and Eudoxius of Antioch, to whom about thirty others joined themselves; the other managed by George of Laodicea, Sophronius of Pompeiopolis, Eleusius of Cyzicum, followed by the far greater part of the synod. It being determined that matters of faith should be handled first, Acacius and his party contended that the Nicene creed should be abolished, and another form drawn up. The other side were in all things for adhering to the synod of Nice, only that the word "consubstantial" should be left out. The dispute held till night, when Silvanus, bishop of Tarsus, stood up and spake aloud, that no new confession should be made, but that that which had many years since been agreed on at Antioch, in the synod assembled for the Dedication, should be ratified: which said, the Acacians withdrew, and the others producing the Antiochian confession, read it in the synod, and so ended that session.

II. The next day being met in council, they shut the doors, and subscribed the confession of Antioch, deputies subscribing for those prelates that could not attend the council. This furnished Acacius and his followers with a plausible objection, who said that those doings must needs be nought, that were forced to seek privacy, and could not bear the open light. The truth is, they had themselves drawn up another confession, which they had privately shewn to Leonas and Lauricius, and which they

were passionately desirous should take place. The third day Leonas took great pains to persuade both parties to meet together in the synod, at what time Macedonius of Constantinople and Basil of Ancyra were come, who joined with the moderate party. At this the Acacians were afresh offended, (they being the chief persons excepted against,) and refused to come into the council, till they who had been deposed, and all that were accused, were first dismissed: which being granted for quietness-sake, they came in; when Leonas acquainted the synod that Acacius had given him a paper, (which he did not tell them was a confession of faith, nor did they suspect it,) which he commanded to be read, together with the preface to it,^v wherein they set forth, “that having, according to the emperor’s command, come to the synod, they had made it their business, that the peace of the church might be preserved, and matters of faith fairly and orderly debated, and that nothing might be obtruded upon the faith of the church, but what was contained in the holy scriptures. But forasmuch as some in the council had affronted several of their party, silenced others, excluded others, whenas they themselves had brought some into the synod that were deposed, and others unduly and uncanonically ordained, so that the council was filled with tumult and confusion; for this cause they were forced to declare, that they did not decline the confession agreed on, and promulgated in the Dedication at Antioch, which they owned and produced at every turn, but because these words *ὁμοούσιον* and *ὁμοιούσιον* had heretofore, and did still disturb and trouble many, and that some had lately introduced a novel term, *τὸ ἀνόμοιον*, importing the Son to be unlike the Father; therefore they rejected both the *ὁμοούσιον* and the *ὁμόλουσιον*, as expressions unknown to scripture, and expressly condemned the *ἀνόμοιον*, and denounced all that held them, to be separated from the church. For that they did openly profess the Son to be like the Father, according to the apostle’s doctrine, who says of him, that he is the image of the invisible God.” Then follows the confession itself, conform neither to the Nicene or Antiochian creed, but warily couched in such terms, that both the Arian and Aetian party might safely subscribe to it. It ran in this form.

^v Ext ap. Socrat. l. ii. c. 40. et Athan. de Synod. s. 29. Epiph. Hæres. lxxiii. s. 24.

“ We confess and believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of things visible and invisible. We believe likewise in his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, begotten of him without any manner of trouble or passion before all worlds, being the Word which is God, the only begotten of God, the Light, the Life, the Truth, the Wisdom, and the Power; by whom all things were made both in heaven and in earth, whether they be visible or invisible. We believe that in the end of the world he took flesh of the holy Virgin Mary for the abolishing of sin, and that he was made man, and suffered for our sins, and rose again, and was taken up into heaven, and there sits at the right hand of the Father, and shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead. We believe also in the Holy Ghost, whom our Lord and Saviour styled the Comforter, and whom he promised to send to his disciples after his departure, and whom he sent accordingly; by whom he sanctifies all those in the church that believe, and are ‘baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ And whosoever shall teach any thing besides this faith, the catholic church does utterly reject such persons.”

Subscribed as followeth.

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| “ I, GEORGE, bishop of Alexandria, have thus declared my faith, and do profess myself to believe as is above written. | PHÆBUS, bishop of Polychalanda in Lydia. |
| I, ACACIUS, bishop of Cæsarea, have thus declared my faith, and profess myself to believe as is above written. | MAGNUS, bishop of Themisa in Phrygia. |
| URANIUS, bishop of Tyre. | EVAGRIUS, bishop of Mitylene in the Islands. |
| EUTYCHIUS, bishop of Elentheropolis. | CYRION, bishop of Doliche. |
| ZOILUS, bishop of Larissa in Syria. | AUGUSTUS, bishop of Euphratesia. |
| SERAS, bishop of Paratonium in Libya. | POLYDICES, bishop of the second province of Libya. |
| PAULUS, bishop of Emisa. | PANCRATIUS, bishop of Pelusium. |
| EUSTATHIUS, bishop of Epiphania. | PHILICADUS, bishop of Augustadæ in the province of Phrygia. |
| IRENÆUS, bishop of Tripolis in Phœnicia. | SERAPION, bishop of Antipyrgum in Libya. |
| EUSEBIUS, bishop of Seleucia in Syria. | EUSEBIUS, bishop of Sebasta in Palestine. |
| EUTYCHIANUS, bishop of Patara in Lycia. | HELIODORUS, bishop of Sozusa in Pentapolis. |
| EUSTATHIUS, bishop of Pinaræ and Didyma. | PTOLEMÆUS, bishop of Thmuis in Augustonice. |
| BASILIUS, bishop of Caunia in Lydia. | AUGURUS, bishop of Cyrus in Euphrasia. |
| PETER, bishop of Hippus in Palestine. | EXERESIUS, bishop of Gerasa. |
| STEPHEN, bishop of Ptolemais in Libya. | ARABION, bishop of Adraa. |
| EUDOXIUS, bishop [perhaps of Antioch.] | CHARISIUS, bishop of Azotus. |
| APOLLONIUS, bishop of Oxyrinchus. | ELISÆUS, bishop of Diocletianopolis. |
| THEOCLISTUS, bishop of Ostracene. | GERMANUS, bishop of Petra. |
| LEONTIUS, bishop of Lydia. | BAROCHIUS, bishop of Arabia.” |
| THEODOSIUS, bishop of Philadelphia in Lydia. | |

To these subscriptions there is a note added in Epiphanius, importing the whole number to be forty-three, whereas being reckoned by particulars, they amount to no more than thirty-nine. To supply this, a man might be apt to suspect that the four bishops, viz. Basil, Mark, Pancratius, and Hypatianus, (whom Epiphanius but just before mentions as present and subscribing,) should be taken in. But that passage (as it is judiciously corrected both by Petavius^w and Valesius,^x with little or no alteration) plainly refers to their subscribing the confession of faith at Sirmium. It remains therefore, that that note was not originally put down by Epiphanius, but added by some later hand, which, heedlessly reckoning upon those four bishops, summed up the whole number into forty-three. But omitting that, come we to the thing itself. The synod was not a little surprised at the matter, Sophronius bishop of Pompeiopolis crying out, if for any man that will, every day to declare his opinion, be to be accounted a confession of faith, we shall soon be left destitute of a measure and rule of truth. In the fourth session, held the day after, Acacius told them, that it could not be inconvenient to draw up now a new confession, seeing the Nicene creed itself had been oft changed and altered. Eleusius of Cyzicum replied, that the synod was now met, not to learn what it had not learned already, nor to receive a faith which it had not before, but that insisting upon the faith derived to them from their fathers, (meaning that of the synod of Antioch,) they should not suffer either life or death to part between them and it.

III. After this they began to examine the Acacian confession, and asked in what sense they held the Son to be like the Father; the Acacians answered, that they affirmed him to be like in will only, not in substance; all the rest affirming him to be so in substance and essence. The day was spent in this dispute, several confuting Acacius out of his own books, wherein he had maintained the Son to be like in all things to his Father, asking how he had face now to deny it. He replied, (and it was, it seems, the best answer he had at hand,) that none, either of the ancients or moderns, was to be judged out of his writings. The wrangling, as in such cases is usual, grew higher, and the dispute grew more warm and hot, till Eleusius stood up and spake to

^w Animadv. in Epiph. p. 326.

^x Annot. in Socrat. p. 36.

this purpose, Whether Basil and Mark have done any thing between themselves, and whether they and the Acacians do mutually charge one another about private matters, the synod is not concerned to inquire, nor is it necessary curiously to examine whether their confession be good or bad; but it becomes us to embrace the faith agreed upon by our elders, the ninety-seven prelates that convened at Antioch; and that if any dare to introduce any other besides this, he be accounted as cast out from religion and the church. This discourse was received with general acclamation, and the synod for that time dismissed. The next day the Acacians refused to come to the council, and so did Leonas, who now openly declared on their side, and the messengers that came from the synod found them assembled in his house. He sent them word that the synod was divided, and that he was commanded by the emperor not to be present, unless they could all agree, that therefore they might go and prate together in the church. The Acacians were often cited, but they sometimes required that certain bishops might be sent to Leonas's house to confer with them, sometimes affirmed that the emperor had empowered them to judge others. So that nothing further could be done, whereupon the synod proceeded to censures; deposing Acacius, George of Alexandria, Uranius of Tyre, Leontius of Tripoli, Eudoxius of Antioch, and some others; and excommunicating Asterius, Eusebius, Abgarus, and six more, till they had purged themselves of the crimes charged upon them; an account of all which they sent in letters directed to the several churches: and so the synod dissolved, ten of them being appointed to wait upon the emperor, to acquaint him what had passed in that council.

IV. But the Acacians were too nimble for them, and got first to court, where they told their tale enough to their own advantage, casting reproaches upon the synod, which they affirmed to have been an assembly of lewd wicked men, met together to the destruction and ruin of the church. Besides, partly by pretexts of truth, partly by bribes, partly by flattery and subtle insinuations, they had made the great men of the court on their side; amongst whom Acacius, who was a man of quick parts, well-spoken, and infinitely active and diligent, and not a little regarded for his eminent station in the church, and his relation to the great Eusebius, his predecessor, had a considerable interest.

The emperor was lately returned from the Western parts to Constantinople, where they met him, who was so incensed at the suggestions which Acacius and his party had made, that he resolved to crush the opposite side, and turned all of that party out of all public offices. And the better to effect their purpose, they persuaded the emperor to convene a synod: which consisted partly of Western bishops; to wit, the legates of the council of Ariminum, lately come to wait upon the emperor, partly of Libyan bishops, Serras, Stephanas, and some others; but the major part were the bishops of the East, especially they of the province of Bithynia, as being next at hand, the chief of whom was Maris of Chalcedon. There met to the number of fifty bishops, or as the Alexandrian Chronicon reports it,^y seventy-two. The synod was divided into two principal factions; ^z the one of the Semiarian or Homoiousian party, under the conduct of Basil of Ancyra and Eustathius of Sebastea; the other of the Heterousians, who held the Son to be of a quite different nature from the Father. The chief heads of this party were Maris bishop of Chalcedon and Endoxius of Antioch, and with them sided Acacius, not so much out of kindness to their opinion, as out of spite to Basil for shewing respect and honour to Cyril of Jerusalem, whom he had deposed. But they who appeared most in the business were Aetius and Eunomius, who though they were but deacons, yet being bold forward men, and quick nimble disputants, were made choice of to enter the lists as champions on this side: which when Basil and his party perceived, they declined the contest, saying, it was an indecent thing for bishops to dispute with deacons about matters of faith. The other side replied, that the dispute was not now about dignity and precedence, but to search and find out the truth. So Basil unwillingly condescended to the debate, wherein (if we may believe my author, a favourer of the Aetian side) he was so utterly and irrecoverably baffled by Aetius, that he not only confessed that the Son was wholly of a different substance from the Father, and had no manner of communication with it, but at Aetius's request ratified this confession with his own subscription. However, Constantius, finding the distractions that were in the council, and that he might not seem altogether to slight the late Seleucian synod, at the instance of the legates, (the

^y Ad An. Const. 23, ubi 54 nomina recensentur.

^z Philost. l. iv. c. 12.

principal whereof were Eustathius of Armenia, Basil of Ancyra, Sylvanus of Tarsus, and Eleusius of Cyzicum,) first referred the matter to the hearing and judgment of Honoratus^a (whom he had then newly made prefect of the city) and some others of the senatorian order, and then recalled it to his own hearing;^b whereat when Basil, presuming upon his wonted freedom with the emperor, took upon him to reprove him for undermining the apostolic doctrine, the emperor commanded him to hold his peace, as being become a disturber of the church. Hereupon Eustathius took up the argument, "And since, sir, (said he,) you desire matters of faith should be determined, behold what blasphemies Eudoxius has vomited up against the only begotten Son of God." And with that presented him a confession, wherein were these words: "Those things that are produced after a diverse manner, are dislike in substance. There is one God the Father, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things. But *of whom*, and *by whom*, are things unlike; therefore the Son is unlike God the Father." The emperor was startled at this, and asked Eudoxius whether this was his writing, who disowned it, and cast it upon Aetius; who being sent for, and shewed the confession, was asked whether he was the author of it. He, not knowing how things stood, and hoping that it made for his credit and advantage, owned it to be his; whereat the emperor immediately sentenced him to be banished to Pepuza, a town in Phrygia, and he was disgracefully turned out of the palace. Then Eustathius charged Eudoxius to be of the same opinion, and that Aetius had written this by his direction, as appeared in that none but he could tell Aetius to be the author. But judges (said the emperor) ought not to proceed by conjectures, but accurately to examine matters of fact. If it be not so, (replied the bishop,) let Eudoxius convince us of the contrary, by denouncing an anathema to this confession of Aetius; which the emperor judging reasonable, commanded him to do it. But the man began to baffle, and sought to elude it by arts and tricks which the emperor perceiving, threatened to send him after Aetius, if he did not do it; which he then did, condemning that doctrine which both then and afterwards he constantly maintained. And when he urged, that Eustathius also ought to condemn the word "consubstantial," as not found

^a Sozom. l. iv. c. 23.

^b Theodor. l. ii. c. 27.

in scripture, Sylvanus answered, that the *ἀνόμοιον* was not the only thing excepted against, that they had invented a great many other expressions (such as τὸ ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, τὸ κτίσμα, and τὸ ἑτερούσιον) not to be found in scripture, nor in any prophetic or apostolic writing, which they should do well to condemn, and to banish out of all Christian assemblies: which the emperor granting, commanded the Eudoxians to condemn them. This at first they refused, till perceiving the emperor to resent their obstinacy, they unwillingly did it, but ceased not still to urge the condemning the word “consubstantial.” Whereupon Sylvanus, turning to the emperor, pressed them with this argument: if God the Word be neither made out of nothing, nor be a creature, nor of any other substance, (these being the expressions which they had but just now condemned,) then he must be “consubstantial” with God the Father, as being God of God, and Light of Light, and have the very same nature with him that begat him. (Though how Sylvanus, who sided with the Semiarians, could so strongly plead for the “consubstantial” doctrine, Theodoret must answer for it.) The argument was unanswerable, but had no success; yea, the Acacian and Eudoxian party raised a great noise and clamour, insomuch that the emperor was angry with the other side, and threatened banishment. Sylvanus and the rest resolutely told him, that he might appoint what punishment he pleased, but it belonged to them to determine concerning matters of piety and impiety, and that they would never betray the doctrine of their ancestors: upon which the emperor gave sentence of banishment against them, and commanded their churches to be anew supplied.

V. This contest being ended, the emperor ordered the synodical deposing and condemnation of Aetius, which his friends and partners durst not contradict, but for fear of the emperor were forced to dissemble, and subscribe the sentence, only Serras and the Libyan bishops stood out. Whereupon a letter was written in the name of the synod,^c and sent to George bishop of Alexandria, to let him know what they had done in the case of Aetius, that for his impious and scandalous writings they had deprived him of his deaconship, and excommunicated him, and had forbid that his impious epistles should be received or read; and that if he persisted in this course, both he and all his

^c Ext ap. Theodor. l. ii. c. 28.

followers should be put under an anathema: that the Libyan bishops that came to the synod had obstinately refused to concur with the rest in this sentence, nor would yield after all the methods that had been used to prevail with them; whom therefore they had denounced excommunicate, if within six months they did not comply with the vote and decision of the council; and had ordered, that being deposed, others should be substituted in their room. In this letter we find Serras, one of the Libyan prelates, though he refused to subscribe to his condemnation, yet giving in this testimony against Aetius before the council: that he had dared to say, that "God had revealed those things to him, which he had concealed from the very apostles, and from all others to that day:" which agrees with what his great admirer Philostorgius reports of him,^c that he had a vision from heaven to confirm and comfort him, and which miraculously conveyed to him an insuperable and irresistible wisdom, so that from that time he had this peculiar gift, that he should always get the better in disputation. No sooner had George received the synodal epistle, but in a convention of bishops, which he had summoned to that purpose, (though placed by my author out of due time,^d) he caused the followers of Aetius (who were numerous in those parts) to subscribe the decree of the Constantinopolitan council made against him. In short, the conclusion of the council at Constantinople was this: they pitched upon the confession, which had the names of the consuls prefixed to it, and that had been lately published in the synod at Ariminum, which they now again confirmed,^e with some few additions made to it, wherein they condemned the word "substance," as unknown, offensive, and unscriptural, and made it unlawful to make any mention of the *hypostasis* of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The main-spring of all these motions was Acacius, who by the power of his interest, and the dexterity of his wit, managed all affairs in the synod, all the acts and despatches whereof, were dictated and digested by him; he steered the emperor which way he pleased, so that he deposed and banished Basil, Eustathius, Macedonius of Constantinople, and all others that stood in his way, whose vacant sees he filled up with such persons as were agreeable either to his humour or his interest.

^c Lib. iii. c. 15.

^d Id. l. vii. c. 2.

^e Ext. ap. Athan. de Synod. s. 30. Socrat. l. ii. c. 41.

VI. The synod at Constantinople breaking up, and the great church of St. Sophia, which the emperor had lately rebuilt, being anew dedicated by Eudoxius, (who upon Macedonius's banishment had invaded that see,) Constantius, in the spring of the year 360, began to set forward in his expedition against Persia, and having unfortunately spent the summer, returned to keep his winter-quarters at Antioch: where they again took the opportunity of establishing their cause by another synod,^f and of damning the word "substance" under any relation, declaring the Son to be in all things unlike the Father, both in substance and in will, and that he was made out of nothing; whence they gained the title of Anomæans, and of Exucontians, or those that affirmed that the Son was made out of nothing. And when the Catholics asked them, how they, who acknowledged the Son to be God of God, durst, contrary to their own declared form, assert him to be unlike, and made of nothing? they replied, they herein followed the apostle, who says, "that all things are of God;" in which number the Son is also comprehended; and in this sense they meant what they had so oft inserted into their confessions, that he was so "according to the scriptures." At last the form agreed upon in the late synod at Constantinople was again approved and ratified. The see of Antioch, by Eudoxius's removal to Constantinople, was vacant at Constantius's coming thither, and upon a nice inquiry Meletius (who upon Eustathius's deposition had been not long before made bishop of Sebastia in Armenia, but lived at this time at Berea) was judged the fittest person for the place; a man in whom all parties consented, each concluding him of their side. He was, it seems, a prudent and moderate man, that had not mixed himself with the squabbles and controversies of the age, but had preached plain, honest, moral doctrine to the people, (as Socrates^g and Sozomen^h expressly say,) so that not having critically declared himself, each party hoped to find him theirs. But no sooner was he settled here, (where he was received with great demonstrations of joy, and with an universal confluence and acclamation of the people,) but he put all out of doubt, openly declaring himself for the catholic doctrine. For the emperor having desired the chief of the prelates to preach upon that text, *Κύριος ἔκτισε με ἀρχὴν*

^f Athan. de Synod. s. 31. Sozom. l. iv. c. 29. Theodor. l. ii. c. 31.

^g Lib. ii. c. 44.

^h Lib. iv. c. 29.

ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔργα αὐτοῦ, “The Lord created me, the beginning of his ways for his works,” that so they might be more accurately expounded to the people, (notaries also being appointed to take their sermons,) first, George bishop of Laodicea, then Acacius of Cæsarea preached, who delivered themselves according to their notions and sentiments in that matter. After them came up Meletius, who discoursed upon the words according to the sense of the Nicene faith,ⁱ and stoutly established the consubstantial doctrine. The people were infinitely pleased to hear him, and entreated him to give them some short memorial of his doctrine; which he did by shewing them three of his fingers, and then contracting two, one only was left, adding, to declare his meaning, there are three which are conceived in the mind, though we seem to speak but to one: which his adversaries stretched, as if he had meant it in the Sabellian sense. Sozomen says, that while he was preaching, the archdeacon (who was of the opposite faction) ran to him, and with his hand stopped his mouth, who thereupon made the signal with his fingers which we mentioned; and when the archdeacon laid hold upon his hand to hinder him, he declared his meaning with a loud voice, and exhorted his auditory to stand to the Nicene faith, protesting that all others were erroneous and false. But however it was, his adversaries were enraged, and procured him to be banished, and Euzoius, an old companion of Arius’s, and who, when deacon, had been deposed by Alexander, to be ordained bishop in his room: which was one thing that occasioned the schism in that church, those who had hitherto mutually communicated, now flying off, and separating from one another. These things were transacted at Antioch about the latter end of the year 360. The year following, another synod was called there,^j upon occasion of Acacius’s complaint to the emperor, against Eudoxius bishop of Constantinople, for having, without common consent, ordained Eunomius bishop of Cyzicum, one that was a professed disciple of Aetius, and a more fiery and zealous heretic than his master. The emperor hereupon sent for Eunomius to Antioch, and summoned an assembly of bishops, whom he commanded to examine the case. The synod calling the case before them, demanded the prosecutor and accuser, but none appeared; for Acacius, who thought to carry his design by his power and

ⁱ Ext. sermo ejus ap. Epiph.

^j Philost. l. vi. c. 4.

interest with the emperor, and never intended it should come under a synodal discussion, declined the process, and would not appear : for which the emperor began to suspect him, as one that had acted herein rather out of malice than any good intent, and therefore commanded him to be immediately gone to his own see.

VII. Constantius was greatly disquieted with these contentions, and found the subdivisions of the Arian tribe designing little more than to undermine one another, for the composing whose differences, he resolved upon a more general synod, which he intended to convene at Nice. But while engaged in these designs, he was unexpectedly taken off, whereupon ensued great revolutions both in church and state. He had some years since taken his cousin Julian to be his colleague in the government, having created him Cæsar, and sent him into France, to defend those parts against the inroads of the Germans, where he managed the province with great success, till partly by his own ambition, and partly by the request of the army, he was moved to take upon him the imperial name and dignity, and was now marching with his army towards the East, to justify what he had done. The news hereof infinitely disturbed Constantius ; but he, trusting to the prosperous successes that had all along attended him against the usurpers of the empire, and having shuffled up a truce with the Persians, turned his forces, and marched to meet his nephew. At Tarsus he fell into a fever, (caused partly by his making too much haste, partly by the inward trouble and vexation of his mind,) which together with his journey increased upon him, till his flesh became so hot, that it burned like fire. Being come to a place called Mopsucrenæ in the confines of Cappadocia and Cilicia, his spirits failed, and he expired ; having first been baptized by Euzoius, and having ordained (at leastwise it was so given out) Julian to be his successor in the empire. He died October the 5th, anno 361, in the forty-fifth year of his age, and the thirty-eighth of his reign, having ruled thirteen years with his father, and twenty-five alone. His body was brought to Constantinople, and after some time buried with a pompous solemnity ; Julian himself walking before the corpse in a mournful posture, having put off his crown, and without any other ensign of majesty upon him than the imperial cloak. He was a prince of a lofty mind, careful to

preserve the decorum of state and empire, a rigid exactor of discipline, especially in military matters, fortunate in vanquishing intestine divisions and home-bred usurpations, unsuccessful in foreign expeditions: a great master of those private virtues that adorn a prince; sober, chaste, and temperate, kind and bountiful to his friends and followers, but of a temper inclined to cruelty, especially where there was the least suspicion of attempting the empire, (seen above others in putting to death so many of his nearest relations,) which yet he sought to cover with a smooth plausible carriage. He was greatly uxorious, and wholly given up to the conduct of eunuchs and flatterers, who stood about him, and admired all his sayings as oracles, and made his affirmation or denial the measure and rule of truth; they filled all great offices in the palace, and were the springs that steered all public affairs, oppressing in the mean time and fleecing the people, and doing innumerable mischiefs under the shadow of his authority. These were the quick-sighted beasts about this many-headed Hydra, (they are Julian's own words, both concerning him and them,^k) that exasperated and made him fiercer, who was not over-mild in his own nature, whatever he pretended to be to others. Neither his natural nor acquired parts were extraordinary, though he affected to be thought learned; but miscarried, whenever attempting any thing that way. In sacred things he was superstitious rather than religious, corrupting Christianity, in itself a most simple and absolute religion, (as the very heathen historian acknowledges upon this occasion,^l) with vain and trifling superstition. He understood little of the controversies then started, which yet he curiously inquired into, and vigorously endeavoured to compose, by striving to draw all parties to be of his mind and way, convening synods for that purpose at every turn, (the expenses whereof were commonly borne at his cost,) so that his whole reign seemed nothing but so many several sessions of one ecclesiastic diet. This laid him open to all the impostures and insinuations of the Arian party, who fed his humour, and abused his power, whereby they stained his reign with the blood and ruin of more catholic Christians than perhaps had suffered under any one heathen emperor. But it seems he saw his error when it was too late, there being three things, which St. Gregory of Nazianzum (who, by the way, in

^k Ad Hermog. Epist. xxiii. p. 339.

^l Am. Marcell. l. xxi. c. 16.

his zealous transports against Julian, elsewhere over-stretches Constantius's commendation) tells us,^m he repented of when he came to die, as the great blemishes of his reign; that he had put to death so many of his kindred, that he had advanced Julian to the empire, and that he had so zealously promoted innovations in the faith.ⁿ And with that protestation, breathed out his last.

SECTION XIII.

HIS ACTS DURING THE REIGN OF JULIAN.

Julian's succeeding in the empire. His pretended kindness to Christians. His restoring all parties from exile, and why. A riot at Alexandria about the temple of Mithras. The insurrection principally levelled against George their Arian bishop: the miserable and ignominious manner of his death. His murder unpitied, he being obnoxious to all parties. His learning and library. Julian's great care to secure his books. The emperor's expostulatory letter to the people of Alexandria about his death. Athanasius's return and welcome. His reformation of his church. His care about the distractions of the church of Antioch. A synod convened at Alexandria to adjust the particular sense of these two terms, *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις*, the cause of great mistakes amongst the Catholics. Apollinarism and other heresies condemned. An account of all given by Athanasius in a letter to them of Antioch. The state of that church. Paulinus made bishop there by Lucifer Calaritanus. This the cause of a long-continued schism in that church. The original of the Luciferian separation. Athanasius, by whom opposed and undermined. The emperor's edict for his banishment; and his letter to Edicius, the governor, to the same purpose. These orders not mitigated by any intercession. Athanasius's flight, and miraculous escaping his pursuers on the Nile. Julian's death made known the same day at Alexandria.

THE death of Constantius brought along with it great alteration of affairs in church as well as state. For Julian being come to the crown, either to sweeten his entrance upon the government, or to reflect an odium upon the memory of Constantius, presently recalled the banished bishops,^o and restored their confiscated estates; and calling for some of the contending parties into the palace, earnestly advised them to lay aside all mutual feuds and animosities, and every one to go on securely in the way of his profession, saying often to them in an affected bravery, "Hearken to me, whom the Franks and the Almain have hearkened to." This pains he took, not out of any kindness to them, (as his own

^m Orat. xxi. p. 339. vid. Zonar. Annal. l. xiii. c. 11. ⁿ Vid. Theodor. l. iii. c. 1.

^o Socrat. l. iii. c. 1. · Sozom. l. v. c. 5. Theodor. l. iii. c. 4.

historian confesses,^p) but to throw a bone of contention amongst them, for he knew that a general toleration would soon set them together by the ears, and that he should be thereby freed from the combination of an united multitude, whom he foresaw the course he intended to steer would be sure to enrage. However, at first, he treated the Christians with great humanity,^q commanding that no force or incivility should be offered to them, and that none should be compelled against their wills to sacrifice; only in the church of Edessa, where the Arian party had made a mutiny, and offered violence to the followers of Valentinus, he took away the rents and revenues of that church: the money he gave to his army, the rents he converted to private uses; which he did, that being made poor, and so eased of their burden, he might help them forwards in their way to the kingdom of heaven, as, according to his sarcastic vein, he expresses himself in his letter to Hecebolus.^r Nor was it long before he made it a general case, depriving the clergy of their honours and privileges, and their allowance of corn out of the public exchequer, and making them subject to serve in the civil courts; yea, forcing the poor maids and widows to refund what they had received out of the common stock and patrimony of the church; he confiscated their rents, and took away their plate and the ornaments of their churches, with infinite other cruelties, not to be related in this place.

II. At Alexandria a riot happened in the beginning of his reign, which yet made Athanasius's return more easy to himself, and welcome to the people. George, the Arian bishop, had been accused of great misdemeanors in the synod at Seleucia, and for his obstinate compliance with the Aetian party had been deposed. But being a man of stomach and courage, had gone on, and that with greater fierceness than before. He was become, through his oppressions and cruelties, extremely burdensome to the people of Alexandria; for he declined not the most sordid acts, nor scrupled the most unjust invading other men's rights, so he might but amass a great estate to himself. He would rob the fatherless,^s and seize estates left by parents to their children; he endeavoured to engross the monopoly of nitre, and to get into his hands the paper-marshes, and the sole trade of the salt-

^p Am. Marcell. l. xxii. c. 5.

^r Epist. xliii. p. 424.

^q Vid. Epist. ejus vii. ad Artob. p. 376.

^s Epiph. Hæres. lxxvi. c. 1.

pits; he invented a new sort of biers or coffins for the carrying out the dead, and would not suffer a corpse to be so carried out, without a fee first paid to him. He was obnoxious to all sorts of men:† the nobility hated him for his pride, and his imperious lording it over the governors, being oftener upon the bench at the decision of civil causes, than praying or preaching in the church; the common people looked upon him as a tyrant, that ruled all at his will; the Catholics fled from him as a merciless persecutor, one that crushed and oppressed them wherever he met them; the Gentiles were enraged at him for prohibiting them to exercise the rites of their religion, and taking away by force of arms the statues, the consecrated gifts, and ornaments of their temples: all which rendered him universally odious, and at this time conspired his ruin upon this occasion. He had been not long since at court,‡ where, according to his custom, he had accused several as not well affected to the government; and amongst other things had informed the emperor, that all the buildings at Alexandria erected by their founder, the great Alexander, at the public charge, ought to pay rent to the exchequer. At his return, passing one day, attended with a great train, through a temple dedicated to the Genius of the city, casting back a scornful look, “And how long (said he) must this charnel-house stand?” This the Gentiles resented as an affront, and looked upon it as a pre-
 sage of the ruin that was intended it, and thenceforth set themselves to study his destruction, which, upon Julian’s succeeding to the empire, they accomplished. The church-historians relate the matter (for that it was the same, I nothing doubt) with more particular circumstances.¶ There was at Alexandria a temple of Mithras, or the Sun, wherein they had used of old to celebrate the worship of that deity, especially by human sacrifices. This place, being decayed and filled with rubbish, Constantius had bestowed upon the church of Alexandria, which George at this time intended to rebuild into a church, and had to that end given order for the cleansing of it. But when they were come to the chancel, or innermost part of the temple, and had cleared the rubbish, they found a great number of dead men’s skulls, both of young and old, who had been slain there in order to their charms and magic rites, together with certain images, and instruments

† Sozom. l. iv. c. 30.

‡ Am. Marcell. l. xxii. c. 11.

¶ Socrat. l. iii. c. 2. Sozom. l. v. c. 7. confer. Chron. Alex. ad Ann. Jul. 1. p. 686.

which the priests had used in their sacrifices and impious mysteries. These the Christians brought forth, and carrying them up and down the streets in triumph, exposed them to the view of the people, deriding the follies and villany of Pagan superstition. The Gentiles were provoked hereat beyond all measure, and catching up what came next to hand, fell upon the Christians, knocking some on the head with clubs, stoning others, or running them through with swords; some they strangled, others they crucified, and none came in their way but were grievously wounded. But their chief spite and rage was against George, the bishop, whom they took, and that night only put into prison. Early in the morning they fetched him out, and abused him with all manner of cruelty, trampled on, and dragged up and down the city; and in the evening, having laid him upon a camel, carried him to the water-side, and there burned him, (and the camel too for company,) and after all threw his ashes into the sea, lest, they said, his followers should gather them up, and build a church over them, as they had done for others, who had died glorious deaths, and had commenced martyrs. His death was charged by the Arians upon Athanasius's party;^w and Philostorgius says expressly,^x it was he plotted and contrived it; and withal intimates, it was a just punishment upon George for compelling the Aetian party to subscribe to the synodical condemnation of Aetius, agreed upon, and sent to him by the council at Constantinople. But what interpretations will not partiality make to serve a cause? What will not malice say to defame an adversary? It is plain, that besides the account given of it by Am. Marcellinus, a heathen writer of that time, Julian himself (who would have been glad of any pretext to have shifted it off from his own side) lays it wholly upon the populace, and those too of his own religion.

III. He was a man suitable to his country and education, proud and insolent, rough and intractable, fierce and bloody, sordid and covetous. But though Nazianzen decry him for his illiberal education, yet must he be confessed to have been something of a scholar. Witness that noble library that he left behind him,^y replenished with all sorts of books, of philosophy, rhetoric, history, but especially such as concerned the Christian

^w Socrat. l. iii. c. 2. Sozom. l. v. c. 7.

^x Lib. i. c. 2.

^y Vid. Julian. Epist. ix. p. 378. et xxxvi. p. 411.

religion; indeed so very considerable, that Julian (who had been acquainted with him heretofore in Cappadocia, and had borrowed several books of him to be transcribed) immediately sent two expresses to secure the books, commanding that his amanuensis should be dealt with, who, if he faithfully discovered them, should be rewarded, if not, punished: charging the governors, under severe penalties, to use their utmost care and diligence in this matter; and that if any of the books had been purloined, they should examine suspected persons upon oath, and their servants by torture, that so not one of them might be concealed from him. But to proceed. The news of his death was no sooner brought to court, but the emperor seemingly resented it as an affront to his government; and though perhaps well enough pleased with the thing itself, yet thought good to take notice of it as a violation of his authority, and the ordinary course of justice. He wrote therefore to the people of Alexandria,² to let them know what a rash and unjust action they had rushed upon; and that although George had done ill things, and deserved as bad, and perhaps worse things at their hands, yet there were laws, and they should have proceeded against him in the usual course of justice, and not taken revenge and reformation into their own hands, a thing not to be endured in any well-established constitution; that it was well for them, that this fell out in his time, who, for the reverence that he bore to their great god Serapis, and for the sake of his uncle Julian, who had been prefect of Egypt, and president of Alexandria, would use no other remedies in this case but soft and gentle methods, to wit, those of argument and persuasion, with which he doubted not but they would readily comply. This unfortunate end had this troublesome and cruel man, with whose fall his party were not so far beaten out of heart, but they pitched upon a successor, ordaining one Lucius a presbyter in his room, who kept the party together in private conventicles.

IV. This uproar at Alexandria being over, Athanasius quitted his solitary retirements, (where he had hitherto sheltered himself,) and returned home. A welcome guest, we may be sure, after so hard and tedious an exile; the ways and streets were crowded from all parts,³ and all places full from whence they

² Epist. x. p. 378. ext. etiam ap. Socrat. l. iii. c. 3.

³ Greg. Naz. Orat. xxi. p. 390, etc.

might behold this great man; the people were divided according to their sexes, ages, and several trades, (as the custom there was, when any great person was to receive the honour of a public entry,) and every one strove to outdo his neighbour in the celebrity of the triumph; which was so great, that it became even proverbial amongst them, when they would express the grandeur of any extraordinary pomp, to say, that "the great Athanasius himself was not brought in with more honour and solemnity." His first work was to restore and reform the church, which he did with all imaginable lenity and greatness, and even to the wonder and approbation of his enemies; next he endeavoured to abolish feuds, and to reconcile persons, both to himself and to one another; injured persons he restored to right, without any regard to parties or interests; matters of doctrine he reduced to their pristine purity, and the faith of the holy Trinity was now again sincerely taught, employing his time in writing to, and receiving letters from the most eminent persons and churches of the Christian world. Nay, many of them repaired to him in person, partly to congratulate his return, partly to assist him in settling the distractions of the church. Amongst the banished bishops, whose minds were intent upon this pious design, were Lucifer bishop of Calaris in Sardinia,^b and Eusebius of Vercellæ in the confines of Jusubria in Italy, who of late had spent the time of their tedious exile in the upper Thebais, not far from Alexandria. These two agreed together, the one to go to Alexandria, the other to Antioch. Lucifer (who sent a deacon or two along with Eusebius to Alexandria to assist in his name) went straight to Antioch, where he found that famous church miserably overrun with schism. Euzoius, the Arian bishop, governed in chief, and for the main carried all before him; the Catholics were divided into two parties, the one the followers of Eustathius their former, the other the followers of Meletius their present bishop, (not yet returned from banishment,) who kept separate meetings, and refused to communicate with each other. Lucifer, hoping to bury this schism by pitching upon a person in whom both parties might agree, unadvisedly ordained Paulinus, a presbyter of the Eustathian party, bishop of that church; which yet was so far from healing, that it widened the breach, one party more being set up in that miserably divided church.

^b Socrat. l. iii. c. 5. et c. 9. Sozom. l. v. c. 12. Rufin. l. i. c. 27, 28. Theodor. l. iii. c. 4.

Paulinus held his assemblies in one of the little churches within the city, which Euzoius, out of courtesy and reverence to the man, permitted him to enjoy.

V. Paulinus, thus advanced to the see of Antioch, despatched Maximus and Calemerus as his legates to Alexandria, where Athanasius with Eusebius and others out of Italy, Arabia, Egypt, and Libya, were assembled in council. The chief things debated and determined in this synod, were concerning the lapsed bishops, who had in the late reign of Constantius gone over to, and joined with the Arians, whether they should be restored to their sees. At length the milder opinion took place, that those who had complied only out of fear or mistake, or had been imposed upon by any specious pretence, should, upon their repentance and abjuring of their error, be re-admitted to their churches. But besides this, the synod perceived that great disputes were arisen about the true meaning of these terms *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις*, one part charging the other with maintaining three Gods or principles, the other recriminating upon them the charge of Sabellianism, or confounding the Persons in the Trinity: a misapprehension that created no little disturbance in the church, and broke out into heats and feuds amongst good men, as in other places, so particularly in the church of Antioch, (for whom the council chiefly intended this synodal determination,) where we find Flavian, a presbyter of that church,^c objecting to Paulinus, whom Lucifer had lately ordained bishop there, that he denied a Trinity of *hypostases*, whereas pope Damasus, with whom he pretended to hold communion, expressly asserted but one nature, but withal that there were three *hypostases* in the Trinity. Both parties were in the right, only by *hypostasis* one meant the essence, (and so there were not three *hypostases*;) while the other understood the Persons in the holy Trinity. The synod therefore, upon a full examination of the matter, finding that the mistake lay only in the ambiguity of the terms, and that they all agreed in the same thing, all held the true faith of the holy Trinity, all abominated the Arian doctrines, all detested the Sabellian and Samosetanian heresies, decreed, that the Nicene creed was the most excellent and accurate compendium of faith, and that henceforth they should rather acquiesce in, and make use of the terms agreed on in that council. And therefore when Socrates

^c Theodor. l. v. c. 3.

affirms,^d that the synod condemned the use of these expressions of *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις*, as applied to God; it is plain he mistook the sense of the council, which was not simply to condemn those terms, (*οὐσία* being the very word used in the Nicene creed,) but to adjust the meaning of them; and because by reason of their ambiguity they were apt to create misunderstandings, that therefore they should keep to those phrases that had been established by the synod of Nice. They anathematized likewise those that denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost, affirming it to be a creature, and of a different nature and essence from that of our Lord. Concerning the incarnation of our Lord, (about which also there began to be some dispute and controversy,) they defined, that the Son of God really took our nature upon him, and was perfect man as well as God, of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting, and that in that capacity he wrought out our salvation. In this synod the legates from Antioch were received, who consented to the acts of it; and soon after it broke up, having, before their departure, desired Athanasius to write an answer to them at Antioch: which not long after was done,^e wherein he at large gives them an account of what had been determined in the synod, earnestly presses the two dissenting catholic parties to peace and concord, and to unite upon no other terms than that of an hearty agreement in the Nicene faith, which was abundantly sufficient to end all disputes; and that whereas some produced an explication made in the Sardican council, they should take notice, that it was forged, and that no such explication had been agreed upon in that synod; that to promote these great ends of peace and unity, they were ready to travel as far as Antioch, which they would have done, had not the present necessities of the church detained them at home. This letter was subscribed by Athanasius, and thirteen bishops that yet stayed at Alexandria, besides the Antiochian legates: Eusebius of Vercellæ subscribed his sentence apart in the Latin tongue, but exactly agreeable to the rest; so did Asterius; and being carried to Antioch, it was subscribed likewise by Paulinus, who added an explicit declaration of his faith concerning three persons, and one divine essence, concerning the incarnation of our Saviour, and that he anathematized those who rejected the Nicene faith, and denied the

^d Lib. iii. c. 7.

^e Ext. Oper. vol. i. par. ii. p. 770.

Son to be of the substance, and co-essential with his Father, or affirmed the Holy Ghost to be a creature, or that held the principles of Sabellius, Photinus, or any other heresy.

VI. Affairs being settled at Alexandria, Eusebius hastened to Antioch,^f where, with infinite trouble, he beheld the lamentable dissensions in that church. Meletius, who returned about this time, kept his residence and the assemblies of his party in the old city, (especially in the great apostolical church founded by St. Peter, and which is itself sometimes styled the "old church," and stood in that part of Antioch.) Euzoios with the Arians had possession of the new, who yet out of respect to Paulinus allowed him the use of one church. And to make the case more deplorable, these two ancient friends and fellow-confessors, Lucifer and Eusebius, who were to have healed the breach, fell out themselves; whether because Eusebius resented Lucifer's rash ordination of Paulinus; and Lucifer on the other side stomached Eusebius's refusing to approve that act, (as Socrates and some others think;) or whether because Lucifer, being a man of a very strict and sour temper, was displeased with the determination of the Alexandrian synod about the restoring of the lapsed bishops; or whether upon both accounts, it is hard to say. Certain it is, that these two good men parted in great discontent; Lucifer returning to his own bishopric at Calaris, the chief city in the island of Sardinia: where though he made a shift in some measure to suppress his sentiments while he lived, (being unwilling openly to disown what he had ratified by his deputies in the synod at Alexandria,) yet after his death it broke out into a violent schism, his followers styling themselves Luciferians, after the name of their master, and utterly rejecting all manner of communion with those that had any ways communicated with the Arians.

VII. While Athanasius was taken up in managing the affairs of his church at home, his enemies were busy to undermine him at court. The Gentiles now enjoyed the full exercise of their religion, and were arrived to that height of impiety, that not content with their common ceremonies, they ran up into the most inhuman and diabolic mysteries; killing young children of both sexes,^g divining by their entrails, and eating their flesh: a

^f Socrat. l. iii. c. 9. Sozom. l. v. c. 13. Rufin. l. i. c. 30.

^g Socrat. l. iii. c. 13.

barbarism practised in other places, but especially at Athens and Alexandria. But in the midst of this horrid licentiousness, it vexed them to see Athanasius in so much vogue and credit with the people, whose pains and presence kept them in, and secured his people from apostacy. He therefore must be removed at any rate: a conspiracy wherein both Arians and heathens joined together. The emperor was informed that Athanasius,^b without any regard to his government, did publicly keep religious assemblies, and had perverted very many Gentiles to his religion; and that if he were suffered to go on, not one Gentile would be left, but that they would all flock over to him; the tribe also of magicians, philosophers, aruspices, and augurs, representing that their arts would signify nothing, unless Athanasius, as the great *remora*, were taken out of the way. Exasperated with these insinuations, the emperor despatched this following edict to Alexandria.ⁱ

“It was but fit, that he who had been banished by so many royal and imperial edicts, should at least have expected one to recall him, before he had ventured to return, and not by so mad and bold a presumption have affronted the laws, as if no such had been made. And even now, when we have given the Galileans, that were banished by Constantius, leave to return, it was not to return to their churches, but into their countries. Notwithstanding, I understand that that daring fellow Athanasius, according to his accustomed confidence, has again repossessed his episcopal see, and that the thing is highly offensive to the pious and good people of Alexandria. Wherefore we command him to depart the city on that very day, whereon you shall receive these our letters; and if he offers to stay, we order far greater and severer penalties to be inflicted on him.”

This edict was attended with a letter to Ecdicius, governor of Egypt, to this effect.^j

“To Ecdicius, Governor of Egypt.

“Although you writ nothing else, you ought certainly to have given us an account of Athanasius, the enemy of the gods,

^b Sozom. l. v. c. 15. Theodor. l. iii. c. 9. Rufin. l. i. c. 33.

ⁱ Ext. inter Epp. Julian. xxvi. p. 398.

^j Epist. Jul. vi. p. 376.

especially when you had long since heard of our useful constitutions. I call to witness the great Serapis, that if this Athanasius, the enemy of the gods, depart not the city, or rather all Egypt, before the first of December, the regiments under your command shall be fined an hundred pound of gold. You know how backward I am to condemn, and how much more backward, when I have done it, to remit and pardon. It is no small trouble to me, that by his means all the gods should be set at nought. Of all your services, none would be more acceptable to me, than to see or hear that Athanasius is driven out of all parts of Egypt; a wretch that has dared under my reign to force many honourable Greek ladies to be baptized."

And when, to mollify these rigorous proceedings, some addresses were made to the emperor in his behalf, he wrote back to them,^k wherein he expostulates with them for their faction and novelty, and their great degeneracy from the religion of their ancestors, it being a shame that any in that city should dare to profess himself a Galilean; that they should do well to hearken to him, who having for twenty years been a Christian, had, by the assistance of the gods, changed his opinion, and had now for twelve years been of the other religion; that however they should retain mutual concord, and give over desiring Athanasius, there being enough of his disciples, and they nothing inferior to him, who might tickle their itching ears with pleasant but impious discourses; that if upon any other account they were desirous of him, for that very reason he would expel him, a busy and factious man, being of all men the most unfit to govern others; if yet he might be called a man, and not rather a pitiful and contemptible rascal, for whose sake it was not worth while to hazard a public disturbance; which that it might be prevented amongst them, as he had sometime since commanded him to quit the city, so now he commanded him to depart all Egypt.

VIII. Athanasius, who foresaw the storm arising, upon the first news of the imperial edict prepared to depart; and when his friends burst out into the most mournful and passionate resentment, he said to them, "Be of good cheer, sirs,^l let us give

^k Jul. Epist. li. p. 433.

^l Socr. l. iii. c. 14. Soz. l. iv. c. 10. l. v. c. 15. Theodor. l. iii. c. 9. Rufin. l. i. c. 34.

way a little, it is but a little cloud, and it will soon blow over." Which said, he presently took boat, and went down the Nile towards Thebais. He was no sooner gone, but the officer came to apprehend him, who having learned which way he went, followed after. But having advice hereof forthwith sent him, his friends that were with him in the boat, persuaded him to go on shore, and to betake himself to the desert; "No, replied he, let us rather go and meet our executioner, that he may know that greater is he that is with us, than he that is against us." And with that commanded the steersman to turn the boat, and row back to Alexandria. By this time the officer and his company were come near, who never suspecting them that were going that way, only inquired of them, whether they saw Athanasius; they answered, he was hard by, and that if they made haste, they might quickly overtake him. So they parted, and by this means the good man escaped, and came safe to Alexandria, where he concealed himself till the storm was overpassed, which happened soon after. For Julian engaging in a war against the Persians, was slain in the engagement, and his death miraculously made known the very same day at Alexandria. There was in that city one Didymus, a devout and severe ascetic, or (as Sozomen styles him^m) an ecclesiastical philosopher, who, while taken up according to his custom with over-long fasting and prayer, fell into a trance, and saw men upon white horses galloping through the air, and crying, "Tell Didymus, and let him acquaint Athanasius, that this very hour Julian is slain, and now let him break his fast."

SECTION XIV.

HIS ACTS FROM THE DEATH OF JULIAN TO THAT OF JOVIAN.

Julian's death infinitely resented by the Gentiles. The kindness of his successor Jovian to the Christians. His letter to Athanasius, to give him an account of the true catholic faith. A synod at Alexandria on that occasion; their epistle to the emperor concerning the catholic doctrine, and the Nicene creed. This letter sent by Athanasius to Antioch, who is heavily complained against by Lucius and the Arian party from Alexandria. Their petitions frequently rejected by the emperor, and their favourers at court checked and punished. Several parties of sectaries endeavour to make their

^m Lib. vi. c. 2. Vid. Pallad. Hist. Laus. c. 3. in vit. Didym.

interest at court, and to undermine each other. The emperor's declaration against dissension in the church. The Acacians subtly comply in a synod at Antioch. An address presented to the emperor by the synod concerning their agreement in the faith. The great sticking of the Anomæan faction at Constantinople. Their frequent ordinations of bishops in all places. Quarrels between Eudoxius and Aetius.

JULIAN'S death cast so great a damp and discouragement upon the Gentiles, that Libanius himself,^a upon the news of it, grew weary of his life, and casting his eye upon his sword, resolved to have despatched himself; which he had done, but that seasonably reflecting upon the principles of his own philosophy, he remembered that the disposal of life was in no man's power, and that in this case we are to await the decrees of God, the violation whereof he could not answer in another world. But his death did not more disanimate the Gentiles, than it gave a new life and spirit to the Christian cause, which but a little before was in danger to be stifled with the vigorous efforts of antiquated paganism. For Jovian, (or Jovinian as others call him,) who had not long since been captain of the guards, but discharged for his resolute profession of Christianity, being proclaimed emperor in the field, and having upon the spot professed himself a Christian, no sooner returned to Antioch, but gave order to the governors of the provinces,^o that they should go to church, and worship God according to the rules of the Christian religion; and that the banished bishops should be called home to their several sees; and that all dissensions (if possible) being removed, the Nicene faith might universally take place. To this end he directed letters to Athanasius, (whom all the world beheld as the great champion of the catholic cause,) requiring him to send him an exact account of what was the true orthodox faith. The good man was glad of the occasion, and a synod of the neighbouring prelates being convened for this purpose, an epistle was drawn up to be presented to the emperor in this form.^p

“To the most religious and gracious prince Jovian the August, the Conqueror, Athanasius and the rest of the Bishops, who come in the person of all the Bishops of Egypt, Thebais, and Libya.

“A mind acted with an earnest desire after the knowledge of

^a De vit. sua vol. ii. p. 45.

^o Socrat. l. iii. c. 23. Sozom. l. vi. c. 3. Theodor. l. iv. c. 2.

^p Ext. ap. Athan. vol. i. par. ii. p. 780. et Theodor. l. iv. c. 3.

divine things, is a temper highly becoming a religious prince; for so shall your heart truly be in the hand of God. Forasmuch, therefore, as your piety desires to learn from us the faith of the catholic church, we, having for this first rendered our thanks to God, have resolved above all things to lay before your devout and religious mind, the faith published by the fathers at Nice; which some having rejected, and thereupon endeavoured by a thousand artifices to undermine us, because we went not along with the Arian sect, have introduced schisms and heresies into the catholic church. But the true and holy faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is manifest unto all, being both known out of, and to be read in the holy scriptures. In which faith holy men have suffered martyrdom, and being dissolved, are now at rest in the Lord; and which had for ever remained pure and entire, if the wickedness of some heretics had not presumed to corrupt it. For a certain person named Arius, together with his followers, made it his business to deprave it, and to bring in impiety in its room; asserting the Son of God to be made out of nothing, to be a creature and a workmanship, and to be mutable; with which discourses they seduced many, so that some who seemed to be of greatest account were led aside with their blasphemous insinuations. But our holy fathers being assembled, as was said, in the synod at Nice, condemned the Arian heresy, and consigned to writing a confession of the faith of the catholic church, which being every where published, extinguished that heresy, which the founders of it had brought in. And this faith is every where known and preached throughout all the churches. But forasmuch as some, being still desirous to renew the Arian heresy, have dared to reject the Nicene faith; others pretend indeed to confess it, but in truth deny it, perverting the meaning of the word 'consubstantial;' and moreover blasphemously affirming concerning the Holy Ghost, that he is a creature, made by the Son; we, taking into consideration the danger arising to the people by these blasphemous assertions, have thought it necessary to offer to your majesty the faith consented to at Nice, that you may understand with how much accuracy it was drawn up, and how widely they err from the truth who maintain any other doctrine. Know, therefore, most religious emperor, that this is the faith which was preached from the beginning, agreed upon by the Nicene fathers, and afterwards owned and subscribed

by all the churches in the world; by those of Spain, of Britain, Gaul; by all Italy, Campania, Dalmatia, Dacia, Mysia, Macedonia, and all Achaia; by all the churches of Africa, Sardinia, Cyprus, Crete, Pamphylia, Lycia, and Isauria; all Egypt and Libya, Pontus and Galatia, and the regions round about; and, in short, by all the churches of the East, a few only excepted, who embrace the sentiments of Arius. The opinion of all these churches in this case we have known upon trial, and have their letters to produce. And though some few dissent from this faith, yet we know, sir, that a few cannot prejudice the consent of the whole world; and being long since infected with Arianism, they do at this time most pertinaciously oppose the truth. Now that your piety may know the faith published by the three hundred and eighteen fathers at Nice, though a thing sufficiently known, we have here set it down. It runs thus: ‘We believe in one God, the Father Almighty,’ &c. In this faith, sir, we ought to continue, as being divine and apostolical; nor may any man alter it by plausible pretences, or sophistical reasonings, as the Arians have done all along, who affirm the Son of God to be made of nothing, that there was a time when he was not, that he was made, created, and is mutable. For this reason the council of Nice, as we said before, condemned that heresy, and explained the true faith. For they did not affirm the Son to be simply and absolutely like the Father, that so he might not be believed to be simply like to God, but to be true God of God. Moreover, they affirmed him to be ‘consubstantial,’ which is the property of a true genuine son begotten of a true natural father. Nor did they separate the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, but rather glorified him together with the Father and the Son, in the one faith of the holy Trinity, there being but one Godhead in the holy Trinity.”

II. This letter was delivered to Athanasius and a committee of the council, who in the name of the synod were to wait upon, and present it to the emperor; for that it should be by them drawn up at Antioch, I can scarcely believe. And indeed it was time for them to hasten thither. For upon the first intimation of the new-created emperor, the Arian party at Alexandria had despatched away Lucius,⁹ Bernician, and some others, to

⁹ Vid. libell. prec. et varia eorum colloquia ap. Athan. vol. i. par. ii. p. 782. Vid. etiam Sozom. l. vi. c. 5.

court, to exhibit a charge against Athanasius. At their arrival they met the emperor riding through the Roman gate to the artillery-ground, whom they petitioned for audience; being asked who they were, whence, and for what they came, they told him, and that they desired a bishop might be set over them. The emperor answered, that he had given order that Athanasius, their former bishop, should possess that see. They replied, that he had been impeached and banished many years ago. Whereat an officer of the army standing by, cried out, "I beseech you, sir, inquire yourself, who and whence these are? for these are the dregs and relics of that wretched George the Cappadocian, who have wasted Alexandria and the whole world." Which the emperor hearing, spurred on his horse, and rid away for that time. At the next opportunity they acquainted the emperor that they had several crimes to lay to Athanasius's charge, and that he had been banished near thirty years since, by the ever-memorable Constantine and Constantius, and after them by the most religious and wise prince, Julian, late deceased. The emperor answered, that accusations made ten, twenty, or thirty years ago, were past and laid aside; that they should say nothing to him of Athanasius, for that he knew wherefore he had been accused and banished. The men were not discouraged with this ill success, but told the emperor at the next meeting, that they had other charges against Athanasius, and requested that they might have any man but him to be their bishop; and that if he came amongst them, the whole city would be infested, and no man would join in his religious assemblies. To this the emperor answered, that he had already told them, he had settled Athanasius's affairs; and that upon strict inquiry he had found him orthodox, and to teach true catholic doctrine. They replied, that he spake well indeed, but dissembled in his heart. That, said the emperor, is enough, which yourselves testify of him, that he speaks well, and preaches truly; and if with his tongue he teaches right, but believes amiss in his heart, he is in that case answerable only unto God. For we that are men, can but hear what is spoken, it is God only knows what is in the heart. And when they complained that he declared them to be heretics and innovators in religion, the emperor said, that in this he did but his duty, and that it was the part of all catholic preachers. After this, and some other trifling requests, the emperor dismissed them for that time, commanding them to meet

together and consult the next day; and after their breaking up told them, that the bishops were there ready, that each of them should draw up the confession of his faith; that Athanasius was there too, (for by this time he and his company were come to Antioch,) and that whoever was ignorant, or unsatisfied in the faith, might learn of him. The issue of the several addresses and conferences was, that Euzoius, the Arian bishop of Antioch, who improved all his interest to settle Lucius in the see of Alexandria, lost his labour; Lucius himself was commanded to be gone, and quietly to behave himself; Probatius, lord chamberlain, and the other eunuchs, (who at Euzoius's instigation had stickled hard for Lucius and the Arian cause,) chastised and punished; the emperor proclaiming, that whoever should dare to undertake any such cause against Christians, should be served in the same manner. After this, Athanasius was honourably dismissed by the emperor, with great commendations of his virtue and the integrity of life, his wisdom and prudence, as well as his orthodox belief.

III. But we must not leave Antioch, before we have seen what became of the attempts that were made by some other parties at that time. The emperor's sweet and excellent temper being known, the principals of every sect flocked about him,^r hoping to establish their particular interests, and to suppress their adversaries. Amongst these the Macedonian party appeared very forward: Basil bishop of Ancyra, Silvanus of Tarsus, Sophronius of Pompeiopolis, and some others, presented a petition in behalf of the Homoiousians, and against the Anomæans; wherein they set forth, that they blessed God for advancing his majesty to the Roman empire, desiring him either that those things might be ratified, which had been concluded in the synods of Ariminum and Seleucia; and those things cancelled, which by some men's power and interest had been effected; or else that the breach remaining in the churches, as it was before those synods, the bishops from all places might meet together in what place they pleased, and freely debate things amongst themselves, none else being admitted into their society; and that the attempts of any who had a mind to act clandestinely, and to impose upon others, (as had been done in the time of the emperor Constantius,) might not be suffered to take effect. That they had not

^r Soerat. l. iii. c. 25. Sozom. l. vi. c. 4.

themselves come to court, lest their numbers might give offence ; but if commanded, they were most ready to do it at their own charge. The emperor taking their petition, gave them no other answer, but that he hated contention, but loved and honoured all that were studious of peace and concord. Much about the same time a synod was held at Antioch, wherein the Acacian party tacked about, and made it appear that they could at any time be of the emperor's religion, and therefore readily joined with the rest in confirming the Nicene "consubstantial" doctrine, which they represented to the emperor in this following address.

"To our most pious and religious prince Jovian, the August, the Conqueror, the synod of Bishops assembled at Antioch out of several provinces.

"We are not ignorant, most pious emperor, that it is your majesty's chief care and study to promote the peace and concord of the church ; nor are we ignorant that you very rightly apprehend a form of the true orthodox faith to be the foundation of this unity. Therefore, that we may not seem to be of the number of those that corrupt the true doctrine, we acquaint your piety, that we embrace and firmly maintain the faith heretofore agreed on in the holy synod of Nice. For the word 'consubstantial,' which to some seemed new and strange, was cautiously expounded by those fathers, so as to signify that the Son is begotten of the substance of the Father, and that he is in substance like unto the Father ; so as neither any passion may be understood to be in that ineffable generation, nor the word 'substance' be taken according to the use and custom of the Greeks ; but so as to overthrow what Arius presumed to assert, that the Son was made out of nothing : which also the upstart Anomæans do with a greater boldness and impudence affirm, to the rending asunder the peace and agreement of the church. And for this reason we have to this our address annexed a copy of the creed composed by the bishops in the Nicene council, which we also own, and is as follows : 'We believe in one God, the Father Almighty,' &c."

This declaration of their faith was subscribed by seventeen prelates, and by Acacius bishop of Cesarea amongst the rest,

than whom no man had heretofore more vigorously opposed the Nicene creed. But he knew, it seems, how to steer his course in all weathers, and softly to comply with what made most for his present ease and interest.

IV. While things passed thus at Antioch, the Anomæan party was not idle at Constantinople. Aetius,^s head of that sect, had conceived great hopes from what Euzoius of Antioch, with his synod of nine bishops, had done in his behalf in the reign of Julian. For at the earnest instance of Eudoxius bishop of Constantinople, he had nulled the sentence of deposition passed upon Aetius, and had drawn up a libel in defence of him and his doctrine. But the change of affairs by the succession of Jovian to the crown, and the late council at Antioch that had expressly condemned the Anomæan doctrine, had broken their measures, and Euzoius thought best to proceed no further in that matter. Whereupon Aetius and Eunomius, who were at this time at Constantinople, conceived it high time to look after their own affairs, and to strengthen and secure their interest in all places. To which purpose they consecrated several new bishops of their sect; at Constantinople they ordained Pœmenius, who dying soon after, Florentius succeeded in his room; Thallus at Lesbos, Euphronius for Galatia and Cappadocia, Julian for Cilicia; Theophilus the Indian was sent to Antioch to persuade Euzoius to perfect what he had begun in the cause of Aetius, and upon refusal, to take the charge of that people upon himself. In Egypt and Libya, Serras and his brethren were to administer the affairs and interests of the party. Over the churches of Lydia and Ionia they set Candidus and Arianus, whom Aetius himself accompanied home to give them possession of their charge. But he met with an opposition which he looked not for. For one Theophilus, a bishop of his own faction, set himself against him, and associating with Phæbus, and seven bishops more, met in a synodal assembly, and protested against him and his proceedings, and wrote letters to Eudoxius, and Maris of Chalcedon, wherein they charged Aetius's ordination as irregular and uncanonical, and that when he had been degraded from his deaconship, he had, without the leave and allowance of his deponers, invaded the episcopal office. They disowned the ordinations he had given to Candidus and Arianus, and any of the rest, as acts done rashly,

^s Philost. l. vii. c. 6. l. viii. c. 2-6.

and without the common suffrage. The letter was very welcome to Eudoxius, who highly resented Aetius's ordaining a bishop under his own nose at Constantinople; and wrote back to Theophilus and his associates, that they should go on vigorously in what they had begun, and proceed severely rather against Aetius and the rest of the ordainers, than against those who had been ordained by them; and perhaps he might at that time be the more tender in the case of Candidus and Arianus, because they were near akin to the emperor Jovian, and had gone to him while he lay yet at Edessa, to solicit him against Athanasius. But he wisely concealing his own opinion, referred the matter to a more public assembly, which soon after met, when he arrived at Antioch. Afterwards Eudoxius wrote likewise to Euzoios to engage him against Candidus and Arianus. But he rejected the motion with some indignation, and in his answer rebuked the rashness and confidence of the man, and advised him to let fall that design; calmly putting him in mind of his great neglect in not performing what he had solemnly engaged to do in the behalf of Aetius. This opposition, and the mutual feuds of these great men, gave a notable check to the Anomæan faction, and made the catholic cause, lately espoused by the council at Antioch, run more clear and smooth.

SECTION XV.

HIS ACTS FROM THE DEATH OF JOVIAN; WITH HIS OWN DEATH AND CHARACTER.

Valens in the East espouses the Arian side. A miserable persecution hereupon raised against the Catholics. Warrants particularly issued out against Athanasius. The people of Alexandria remonstrate the true state of his case. Athanasius retires, and happily escapes the fury of his persecutors. The embassy of the Alexandrians to court in his behalf. The quiet that ensued upon it, while the persecution raged in all other places. His interposals in the affairs of foreign churches. His assisting Basil to compose the distractions in the church of Antioch. His age, death, and successor. The opposition made by the Arians against Peter his successor, and the heavy persecution that commenced thereupon at Alexandria. His admirable character drawn by Nazianzen. His natural parts, and acquired learning, what. His great accuracy in theological studies. Charged with skill in magic, and why. His style and way of writing highly commended. His writings justly held in great esteem. His works distinguished into doctrinal, polemical, and historical. A general account of each. Spurious books fathered upon him. His writings enumerated.

THINGS thus happily proceeded, when these hopeful beginnings

of the church's prosperity were checked by Jovian's sudden and unexpected death, after he had reigned not above eight months. To him succeeded Valentinian, a sweet and good natured prince, and a great patron of the catholic cause; who chose the West for the seat of his empire, assigning the East to his brother Valens, whom he assumed to be his colleague in the government, one of somewhat a more rough and intractable temper; who being baptized by Eudoxius bishop of Constantinople, in order to his more prosperous expedition against the Goths, soon after declared himself in favour of the Arians. They were not to be taught how to improve the advantage of having the imperial authority on their side. Edicts were hereupon sent to the governors of provinces,^t that the bishops, who in the time of Constantius had been banished, and restored by Julian, should be again expelled their churches; Valens hoping hereby to decline the envy of the fact, by insinuating that he did but revive the law of his predecessor. We may be sure that Athanasius was not without his share in the common calamity, nay, a more particular regard was had of him, very severe both pecuniary and corporal mulcts being threatened to all officers from the highest to the lowest, if they did not herein faithfully and diligently execute their warrants. But the people of Alexandria began to remonstrate, entreating the governor that he would not rashly force away their bishop; that he would more considerably weigh the tenor of the imperial letters, which were directed only against such as being banished by Constantius, had been recalled by Julian: that Athanasius was not within this compass; that he had indeed fled under Constantius, but that he was by him recalled and restored to his see; and that when Julian restored all the rest, he was the only person whom he persecuted, but that Jovian had again recalled him. All would not satisfy, the governor persisted inmoveable in his resolution; which the multitude seeing, made head, and resolved to defend him from force and violence. And now all things openly tended to sedition, the people threatening to burn the corn-ships, that transported grain from Alexandria, and to set fire to the public buildings; to prevent which, the governor prudently let the thing rest at present, till he could give the emperor an account of it. So that the storm seemed to be wholly

^t Sozom. l. vi. c. 12.

laid ; but Athanasius, foreseeing what was like to happen, and fearing to be accused as the author of a rebellion, privately in the evening retired out of the city ; and, that he might be the more unsuspected, concealed himself in a monument belonging to his family, where he lay hid for the space of four months. And it was a seasonable retirement. For that very night he withdrew, the governor, attended with the commander of the forces, came to the church, whereto adjoined Athanasius's house, hoping that the people being all asleep, they might easily apprehend him without any tumult ; they narrowly searched all places, ransacking the very garrets and top of the house, but finding him not, returned. The governor at this time was Tatian,^u a person of great cruelty and inhumanity, whom the divine vengeance not long after overtook. For, being divested both of his preferments and estate, he was forced to beg his bread ; and being struck blind, led a disgraceful and uncomfortable life : his statues also in all parts of the city being smoked and blacked, were everywhere exposed to contempt and scorn. But to proceed.

II. The Alexandrians, not knowing what representation the governor might make, did themselves send an embassy to the emperor,^w earnestly beseeching him, that for peace-sake Lucius the Arian bishop might be translated to Antioch, or some other place, and that Athanasius might be permitted quietly to possess his see. The emperor, either out of regard to the great fame and reputation of the man, (for whom the world had so just a reverence and veneration,) and especially fearing to provoke his brother Valentinian, or else apprehending the ill consequences of a rebellion in Egypt, (where he knew Athanasius had so numerous a party, and where the people were so naturally disposed to seditions and tumults,) if things were carried with too stiff a hand, yielded to their request, and gave him leave to return : to which the wiser heads of the Arian faction were not unwilling, foreseeing that if Athanasius were banished, he would in probability make his address at court ; where, upon a just representation of affairs, he might undeceive and bring over Valens, especially having the emperor Valentinian to befriend him. But

^u Vit. Athan. ap. Phot. Cod. CCLVIII. et ap. Sim. Metaphr. Gr. Lat. ap. Athan. vol. i. p. cliv. s. 17.

^w Epiph. Hæres. lxxviii. c. 10. vid. Socrat. l. iv. c. 20.

whatever the cause was, the effect was happy, the good man by this means enjoying henceforward a calm and serene season, while the storm raged in the neighbour churches round about him:^x some were impeached with false accusations, and drawn before the courts of judicature, others scourged and beaten; some imprisoned, others fined, or their estates confiscated: and when, for the redress of these intolerable grievances, eighty ecclesiastic persons were appointed to carry a petition to the emperor, then at Nicomedia, upon the delivery of it, the emperor, who was highly enraged, but yet dissembled his resentment, gave order to the governor to put all these persons aboard a ship, under pretence of transporting them into banishment, which was done accordingly, and the ship being out at main sea, the mariners, according to their instructions, got into the boat, and set the ship on fire, whereby all those fourscore innocent persons miserably perished. All this while Athanasius sat quiet and secure at home, and was at leisure by his councils and interest to assist his friends in foreign parts. He had been lately called upon by St. Basil,^y to interpose his influence and authority for composing the distractions at Antioch, and other churches of the East, as being a person whose prudence and piety, whose age and experience, and whose many sufferings for the faith rendered him the fittest person to undertake such a work; that therefore he should do well to improve his interest with heaven by prayers for them, send legates to the bishops of the West, to give them an account of the calamitous state of the Eastern churches; and afterwards others into the East, where there was the greatest danger, and most immediate necessity of his assistance. And by his next letter,^z wherein he again presses the same thing, it appears he had some expectation of Athanasius's coming into those parts, and enjoying the company (as he calls it) of that truly great and apostolic soul. But age, and the multitude of his affairs at home, would not suffer him to undertake so great a journey; however, not to be wanting in what he might, besides others, he sent Peter a presbyter of his church,^a as his deputy and vicegerent, who travelled earnestly in those matters, till he had brought them to a tolerable composure and agreement.

^x Socrat. l. iv. c. 15, 16. Sozom. l. vi. c. 14.

^y Ad Athan. Epist. lxvi. (al. xlvi.) s. 2.

^a Ad Athan. Epist. lxix. (al. lii.) s. 1.

^z Epist. lxxx. (al. xlix.)

After which, St. Basil despatched Dorotheus, Meletius's deacon at Antioch, to Athanasius, for his further advice and counsel; entreating him to write to the bishop of Rome, that since a general synod could not be had about this affair, he would send his opinion about it, and depute some fit persons to come into the East, (who might have an easy and private passage by sea,) persons furnished with prudence and meekness, who might allay the heats, and bring with them the acts of the synod at Ariminum, and rescind those things which had by force and violence been enacted in that synod: and withal it was very much desired both by himself and others, that they should come empowered to condemn the heresy of Marcellus, which still spread itself, and whereof he had his books by him, evidences beyond all dispute; and this the rather necessary for them to do, because in all their letters directed into those parts, they had sufficiently censured and anathematized Arius, but in the mean time had taken no notice of Marcellus, who had brought in a quite contrary, but perhaps no less impious and dangerous error. That Athanasius complied with this request, we need not doubt, for we find the Western prelates by letters and messages comforting them under their sufferings, and expressing a great sympathy and commiseration towards them.^b Nor was Athanasius wanting in personal kindness towards St. Basil, writing in his behalf;^c when the monks of his diocese fell out and quarrelled with him, reproving their rashness and insolence in mutinying against so great a person, whom he styles "the glory of the church;" and tells them they had cause to bless God, that had given such a bishop to Cappadocia, whom every province would be glad of.

III. Athanasius, being thus full of days, and broken with infinite labours and hardships, departed this life in a good old age, Gratian, the second time, and Probus being consuls, (says the church-historian,^d) that is, Ann. Chr. 371; the year after, says Baronius,^e and most of the moderns. But Proterius, one of his successors in that see, tells us, in his letter to pope Leo about the paschal cycle,^f (if for Anastasius we are there, as no doubt we are,

^b Vid. Basil. Ep. cclxiii. (al. lxxiv.) s. 1. et Ep. ccxlii. (al. clxxxii.) s. 2.

^c Epist. ad Joan. et Antioch. vol. i. par. i. p. 956. Epist. ad Pallad. ibid. p. 957.

^d Socrat. l. iv. c. 20.

^e Ad Ann. 372.

^f Edit. à Ducher. Com. in Victor. Can. Pasch. c. 2.

to read Athanasius,) that he was yet alive March 24, Ann. Chr. 373, or, according to his way of computation, in the 89th year of the Diocletian era. He died January the 18th, says an anonymous author;^g on the 2nd of May, according to the calendar of the Greek and Latin church; on the seventh of that month, says the author of the *Excerpta Chronologica* published by Scaliger,^h in the 46th or 47th year of his episcopal office. Being asked before his death concerning a successor,ⁱ he nominated Peter, the same no doubt whom he had lately sent to St. Basil into the East, and who had been the constant companion of his labours and sufferings, to whom he gave many grave and wise directions, how to behave himself in those troublesome times: a person so venerable for his great parts and piety, his known zeal and resolution for the truth, that Theodosius the emperor made him one of the two standards of catholic doctrine, from whom all persons in that case should take their measures, as appears from a law he made for reducing the people to the catholic faith,^k wherein also he styles him "a man of apostolic sanctity." The people rejoiced greatly at the designation of so excellent a person, and the election was consummated by the vote and hands of the neighbour-bishops. The news of Athanasius's death soon flew to the court at Antioch, when Euzoios, bishop of that place, having procured the imperial warrants, and attended by Magnus, lord-treasurer, hastened immediately to Alexandria, where joining with Palladius the governor, a bitter and implacable enemy to Christianity, they violently broke in upon the church, and raised a persecution not inferior in profaneness, and the most horrid impieties, in cruelty, and the most savage barbarities, to any that had been before it, those of the heathen ages not excepted. Peter they seized, and cast into prison, and advanced Lucius, the Arian, (that second plague of Egypt, traitor to the truth, that pastor of wolves, the thief that climbs over the fold, the second Arius, a current fuller than its pernicious fountain, as Nazianzen styles him,^l) to the episcopal throne, delivering the churches into his hand, and giving him power to do whatever might make for the interest of his cause. Peter escaping out of prison, took shipping and went to Rome,

^g Vit. Athan. Gr. Lat. ap. Athan. vol. i. p. cxxvii.

^h Non Procul à fin. p. 85.

ⁱ Rufin. l. ii. c. 3. Socrat. l. iv. c. 20. Sozom. l. vi. c. 19. Theodor. l. iv. c. 20.

^k Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. i. l. 2. Vid. Sozom. l. vii. c. 4.

^l Orat. xxiii. p. 417.

where he was kindly received, and where he expected a more favourable season; whence after some time being effectually recommended by pope Damasus's letters, he returned home, recovered his see, and drove out Lucius, who fled to Constantinople; but the emperor at that time being taken up with the inundation of the barbarous nations on the one hand, and frightened with the rebellion of his own people at home, that threatened him on the other, was not at leisure to assist him.

IV. Thus have we brought the great Athanasius to his grave, the most considerable man of the church in his time. Take his character from one of the most elegant pens of that age.^m "He was," saith he, "as humble in his mind as he was sublime in his life; a man of an inimitable virtue, and yet withal so courteous, that any might freely address to him; meek, gentle, compassionate, amiable in his discourse, but much more so in his life; of an angelic look, but much more of an angelic temper and disposition; mild in his reproofs, and instructive in his commendations, in both which he observed such even measures, that his reproof spake the kindness of a father, and his commendation the authority of a master; so that neither was his indulgence over tender, nor his severity austere, but the one savoured of gentleness and moderation, the other of prudence, and both the effect of true wisdom and philosophy. He was one that so governed himself, that his life supplied the place of sermons, and his sermons prevented his corrections; much less need had he to cut or lance where he did but once shake his rod. In him all ranks and orders might find something to admire, something particular for their imitation: one might commend his unwearied constancy in fasting and prayers; another his vigorous and incessant persevering in watchings and praises; a third, his admirable care and protection of the poor; a fourth, his resolute opposition of the proud, or his condescension to the humble. The virgins may celebrate him as their bride's-man, the married as their governor, the hermits as their monitor, the cœnobites as their law-giver, the simple as their guide, the contemplative as a divine, the merry as a bridle, the miserable as a comforter, the aged as a staff, the youth as a tutor, the poor as a benefactor, and the rich as a steward. He was a patron to the widows, a father to orphans, a friend to the poor, a harbour to strangers, a brother

^m Greg. Naz. in Encom. Athan. Orat. xxi. p. 378.

to brethren, a physician to the sick, a keeper of the healthful, one who 'became all things to all men, that if not all, he might at least gain the more.' With respect to his predecessors in that see,ⁿ he equalled some, came near others, and exceeded others; in some he imitated their discourses, in others their actions, the meekness of some, the zeal of others, the patience and constancy of the rest; borrowing many perfections from some, and all from others; and so making up a complete representation of virtue like skilful limners, who, to make the piece absolute, do first from several persons draw the several perfections of beauty within the idea of their own minds; so he, insomuch that in practice he out-did the eloquent, and in his discourses outwent those who were most versed in practice; or, if you will, in his discourses he excelled the eloquent, and in his practice those that were most used to business; and for those that had made but an ordinary advance in either, he was far superior to them, as being eminent but in one kind; and for those who were masters in the other, he out-did them, in that he excelled in both." This and much more has that incomparable father, who says in the beginning of that encomiastic, that to commend Athanasius, was the same thing as to commend virtue itself; that the course of his life was accounted the standard of the episcopal function,^o and his doctrine the rule of orthodoxy; that he was the most holy eye and light of the world,^p the archiepiscopal bishop, the pillar of the faith, and a second John the Baptist. The truth is, he was a man of real and unfeigned piety, of an impregnable courage, which no dangers or troubles could daunt; of a most active and unconquerable zeal for the catholic faith, in the defence whereof he held up the bucklers, when the united strength almost of the whole world besides pressed upon him, and which never flagged under so many years' potent opposition, and so many and such barbarous hardships as were heaped upon him. He overcame every thing by a mighty patience, and recommended his cause by the meekness of his sufferings; he was *τοῖς μὲν παύουσιν ἀδάμας, τοῖς δὲ στασιάζουσι μαγνήτης*, (as the forecited father says of him,^q) an adamant to his persecutors, and a loadstone to dissenters; the one found him incapable of impressions, no more apt to yield than a rock of marble; the other by a singular meek-

ⁿ Greg. Naz. in Encom. Athan. Orat. xxi. p. 375.

^o Ibid. p. 397.

^p Id. Orat. xxiii. p. 417.

^q Orat. xxi. p. 392.

ness and a generous patience he drew over to himself; or where not that, he drew them at least to a secret reverence and veneration of him. He was, in short, what Vincent of Lire truly says of him,^r “a most faithful teacher, and a most eminent confessor.”

V. His natural parts were acute and brisk, his reasonings quick and smart, his judgment staid and solid; all which, had they been improved with equal advantages of education, were capable to have rendered him one of the most learned persons the church ever had. But his juvenile efforts and researches were soon diverted to more grave and severe studies, which made him less eminent in the politer parts of secular learning, for the want whereof he is censured by Philostorgius. He was taken, when but a youth, into the service of a sage reverend prelate, under whom he engaged betimes in theological speculations, and nice disputes about the most sublime articles of religion, lived all his time in a crowd and bustle, and was exercised with little else besides crosses and controversies to his dying day. Thus Nazianzen apologizes for him,^s “That he was instructed early in divine studies, and did but just salute philosophy and the arts, that he might not seem altogether a stranger to them, nor to be ignorant of those things which he did not think worth his more serious care. For he was not willing that the noble and generous efforts of his mind should be stifled and swallowed up in such vain researches; he applied himself to the meditation of the Old and New Testament, becoming a greater master in both than any other was in one; thence he enriched his notions, thence he adorned the brightness of his conversation, both which he admirably connected as a golden chain.” Indeed his masterpiece lay in the studies of theology, and church-learning, wherein he was, in a manner, (says Sozomen,^t) *ἐκ νέου αὐτοδίδακτος*, self-instructed from a child, and which his continual conflicts with the Arians and other heretics of that age forced him to beat out to the utmost accuracy and perfection. He was a profound divine, an excellent preacher, a prudent governor, furnished with all the graces necessary to that office. Nor was he unversed in the paths of foreign and external learning; besides those of humanity, he was well read in the laws of the Roman empire, whence Severus styles him, *Juris con-*

^r Commonit. c. 42.

^s Orat. xxi. p. 376.

^t Lib. ii. c. 17.

sultum,^u one skilful in the laws. He was accused likewise, (says the heathen historian,^v) to be exactly skilled in astrology and magic; that he understood the *sortes fatidicæ*, and the augural portent of the flight of birds, and had sometimes foretold things to come: which, however improved by the Arians and heathens into a formal charge, seems to have had no wiser a foundation than this occasion. Passing on a time through the streets,^w a raven chanced to fly croaking over his head: the Gentiles that stood by asked him in scorn, what it was the raven said. He, smiling, and alluding to the noise of the bird, answered, it cried *cras*, which in the Roman language signified to-morrow, and thereby portended, that to-morrow would be no very acceptable day to them, for that the emperor would thenceforth prohibit them to celebrate their pagan festivals: which, however slighted by them, accordingly came to pass; for the next day letters came from the emperor to the magistrates, commanding them to forbid the Gentiles to resort to their temples, and to abstain from the customary rites and solemnities of their worship.

VI. His style and way of writing is everywhere,^x but especially in his epistles and apologetics, very clear and perspicuous, grave and chaste, compt and eloquent, acute and persuasive, and admirably adapted to the subject that he undertakes. He frequently uses logical arguments and ratiocinations, not barely pounded, and strictly tying himself to terms of art, (as young scholars do, that vainly dispute for glory,) but, like a wise and generous philosopher, duly forming and dressing up the conceptions of his own mind. As occasion requires, he is wont to confirm his argument with frequent testimonies and demonstrations derived out of the holy scriptures, especially in such points as are of pure revelation. Compared with other writers, he is not (if we may trust Erasmus's judgment^y) harsh and rugged like Tertullian, affected like St. Jerome, not operose and difficult, which is the fault of St. Hilary; not full of turnings and windings like St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom; he savours not of Isocrates's numbers, or Lysias's elaborate compositions, like St. Gregory of Nazianzum; but is wholly taken up in explaining the matter he has in hand, being clear, quick, sober, and intent upon his argument. His works were ever held in great estimation:

^u Hist. sacr. l. ii. c. 36.^v Am. Marcell. l. xv. c. 7.^w Sozom. l. iv. c. 10.^x Vid. Phot. Cod. XXXII. et CXXXIX. CXL.^y Prefat. in Athan. Epist. de Sp. S. et inter Epist. l. xxx. Ep. 88.

“ when thou meetest with any tract of Athanasius, (said abbot Cosmas to the author of the *Pratum Spirituale*,²) and hast no paper at hand to transcribe it, rather than fail, write it upon thy coat.” Several of his writings are lost, those yet extant are either doctrinal, polemical, or historical. His doctrinal tracts are most-what spent in laying down, explicating, and asserting the main doctrines and principles of the Christian faith; such are his *Expositio Fidei*, *Responsum ad Liberium*, his Homilies *de Semente*, and *de Sabbato et Circumcisione*, &c. His polemic pieces are levelled either against heathens or heretics: against the former he disputes rationally and wittily in his two books against the Gentiles, the latter whereof, though it has been thought to be lost, yet, it is plain, it is no other than his *λόγος περὶ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τοῦ λόγου*, his discourse concerning the incarnation of the Word; as is beyond all dispute evident at first sight from the beginning of it, where he tells us, that having in the former tract succinctly though sufficiently treated of the idolatry and superstition of the Gentiles, and its original in the world; and having spoken something of the divinity of the Word of God, and his universal power and providence, as by whom God the Father creates, governs, and disposes all things; he would now, according to his method, proceed to treat of the incarnation of the Word, and his divine coming in the flesh, against the calumnies of the Jews, on the one hand, and the derision of the Gentiles, on the other. But his main conflict was not with open enemies, but secret depravers of the Christian doctrine; and though, as they come in his way, he spares no sort of heretics, confuting the Marcionites, Valentinians, Samosetians, Sabellians, Manichees, &c. yet he principally directs his forces against the Arians, whom at every turn he beats out of all their refuges: and this he has especially done in his five Orations against the men of that sect, a book which Photius thinks to be alone sufficient to overturn the whole foundation of Arianism,³ so clearly, so fully has he managed the controversy in those discourses; a magazine out of which, it is thought, St. Basil and St. Gregory the divine, borrowed their best weapons to resist and refel the errors of that subtle and daring heresy. In his historical tracts, (in which number we must comprehend his apologetical discourses, most-what filled with matters of fact,

² *Prat. Sp.* c. 40. *Bibl. Patrum. Gr. Lat.* vol. ii. p. 1070. ed. 1624.

³ *Loc. supr. citat.*

and wherein he more particularly stretches forth all the nerves of his wit and eloquence,) he gives us a clear and distinct account of the most material transactions of his age; and for which alone we can never pay a sufficient tribute of thankfulness to his memory, who otherwise had been left miserably in the dark, there being in his writings far more and far better accounts of the state of those times, than in all other writers put together; indeed, little in others but what is borrowed from him, and what commonly fares worse by falling into other hands. Nor has he escaped the fate of all wise and excellent writers, to be abused by others. For besides that heretics made bold sometimes to corrupt his writings, (an instance whereof Rufinus tells us he knew in his time,^b) others presumed to gain credit and authority to their writings, by thrusting them out under his name. The first I find charged in this kind,^c being the Nestorian and Eutychian monks of Palestine, who fathered several of Apollinaris's pieces upon him. And the example was followed by after-ages, who have laid a numerous bastard-issue at his door, and some of them foolish and trifling, and altogether unworthy so great a name. Of all which, both genuine and spurious, for a conclusion, we here present the reader the following index.

His writings.

<i>Genuine.</i>	Epistola de Synodi Nicæen. contra Hæresim Arianam decretis.
Oratio contra Gentes.	Epistola de Sententia Dionysii Alexand. adv. Arianos.
Oratio de incarnatione Verbi.	Ad Fratres Orthodoxos Epistola Catholica.
Contra Arianos Disputationes seu Orationes quinque.	Refutatio Hypocriseos Meletii, Eusebii, et Pauli Samosat. <i>περὶ τοῦ ὁμοουσίου.</i>
In illud Dictum; "Omnia tradita sunt mihi a Patre," &c.	Epistola ad Antiochenos.
Ad Adelphium Episc. contr. Arianos Epistola.	Epistola ad Epictetum Episc. Corinth. adv. Hæreticos.
Epistola ad Maximum Philosophum de Divinitate Christi.	De incarnatione Verbi Dei adv. Paulum Samosat.
Epistola ad Serapionem adv. eos, qui dicunt filium creaturam esse.	De humana natura suscepta, et contra Arianos.
Epistola ad eund. adv. eos, qui dicunt Spiritum S. esse creaturam.	De incarnatione Domini contra Apollinarium.
Expositio Fidei.	Oratio de adventu Christi adv. eundem.
Responsum ad Liberii Epistolam, cum Epistola Liberii.	Oratio contra gregales Sabellii.
Epistola ad Jovianum de Fide.	Oratio, quod unus sit Christus.

^b Apol. pro Orig. ap. Hier. vol. v. p. 253.^c Evagr. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 31.

Genuine.

Epistola ad Serapionem de morte Arii.
 Apologia ad Imperatorem Constantium.
 Apologia de fuga sua.
 Apologia secunda (sive contra Arianos.)
 Epistola ad omnes ubique solitariam vitam
 agentes.
 Populi Alexandrini protestatio.
 Epistola de Synodis Arimini et Seleuciæ.
 Epistola ad Africanos adv. Arianos.
 Epistola ad omnes ubique orthodoxos.
 Epistola ad Joannem et Antiochum.
 Epistola ad Palladium.
 Epistola ad Dracontium.
 Ad Marcellinum de interpretatione [seu
 Titulis] Psalmorum.
 De Sabbatis et Circumcisione.
 In illud, "Quicumque dixerit verbum contra
 filium," etc.
 In illud, "Profecti in Pagum," etc.
 De virginitate.
 Homilia de Semente.
 Oratio contra omnes Hæreses.
 Oratio in Assumptionem Domini.
 Oratio de Melchisedech.
 Epistola ad Serapionem de Spiritu S.
 Ad eund. de Spiritu S. Epistola altera.
 Contra Arianos λόγος σύντομος.
 Libellus precum, seu colloquia varia Ariano-
 rum cum Joviano Imper. Antiochiæ ha-
 bita.
 De incarnatione Verbi Dei.
 Responsum ad Epistolam Joviani, cum Im-
 peratoris Epistola.
 Epistola ad Αμμωνῆν Monachum.
 Epistolæ 39. Festalis Fragmentum.
 Epistola ad Rufinianum.
 Ad Luciferum Calaritanum Epistolæ duæ,
 Lat.
 Fragmenta Commentariorum in Psalmos.

Doubtful.

Synopsis S. Scripturæ.

Testimonia ex S. Scriptura de communi
 essentia Patris, Filii, et Spiritus S.
 Sermo in passionem et crucem Domini.
 Vita D. Antonii, *prout extat hodie.*

Supposititious.

Disputatio contra Arium in Synodo Nicæna.
 De sanctissima Deipara Virgine.
 Symbolum Athanasii.
 Tractatus de Definitionibus.
 De S. Trinitate Dialogi quinque.
 Dialogus inter Orthodoxum et Macedonia-
 num, continens viginti Capitula.
 Quæstiones 135 ad Antiochum.
 Dicta et Interpretationes parabolæ Evan-
 gelii, Quæst. 133.
 Quæstiones aliæ viginti.
 Disputationes cum Ario Laodiceæ habitæ,
 Lat.
 De unita Deitate Trinitatis ad Theophilum,
 Libri septem, Lat.
 Ad Monachos exhortatio, Lat.
 Epistola ad Marcum Papam, cum Rescripto
 Marci, Lat.
 De passione imaginis D. N. I. Christi cruci-
 fixa in Beryto.
 Declaratio Levitici.
 Homiliæ septem, *ab Holstenio Latine editæ.*
 Expositiones duæ de Incarnatione Verbi:
ext. Lat. in Biblioth. Patrum, vol. xi.
p. 3.
 Orationes quatuor, *in Anchiurio Gr. Lat. a*
Combes. edit. vol. i.
 S. Syncreticæ vita. *Lat. ap. Bolland. ad*
Januar. 5.

Not Extant.

Commentarii in Ecclesiasten.
 Comment. in Cantica Cantorum.
 Contra Valentem et Ursacium Liber unus.
 Epistolæ έοπραστικαί.
 Epistolæ aliæ plures.

THE LIFE OF SAINT HILARY,

BISHOP OF POICTIERS.

The eminent place of his nativity. His education in the Gentile religion ; and by what methods converted to Christianity. His baptism. His married life. Marriage not then thought inconsistent with the pastoral or episcopal office. His singular piety, and concernment for religion, while yet a laic. Advanced to the see of Poitiers, and when. His ignorance of the controversies about the Nicene faith after he was bishop. He sets himself to oppose the growing power of Arianism in the West. His remonstrance to Constantius concerning the state of the Catholic party, and his impartial dealing with that emperor. Constantius's edict in favour of bishops. His abstaining from all communion with the favourers of the Arian party ; and detecting the impiety of that cause in a discourse presented to the synod at Arles. An order directed to Julian for his banishment into Phrygia. His employment during the time of his exile. His writing the twelve books *de Trinitate*. His frequent advices sent to the bishops in France. His letter to his daughter Abra, to engage her to a single life. The letter now extant, of suspected credit. His book *de Synodis*, written to give the Gallican bishops an account of what late confessions of faith had passed in the East. His being summoned to the council at Seleucia, and what happened in his passage thither. He vindicates the churches of France from the imputation of Sabellianism, charged upon them by the Arians. His defence of the *ἁμοούσιον* in the synod. The blasphemy of the Anomæans, and the hypocrisy of their principles. Hilary's petition to the emperor. His oration to him in vindication of the Catholic cause. His bold libel directed to Constantius, published after the emperor's death. His release from banishment, and return homewards. St. Martin one of his scholars, his course of life, and intimate familiarity with St. Hilary. The state of his church at his return. The great influence of his judgment, in determining that the penitent bishops were to be admitted to communion. A synodical answer to the Eastern bishops, discovering the artifices of the Arians. Saturninus of Arles excommunicated. A book of St. Hilary's corrupted, and the fraud detected. His journey to Milan to expose Auxentius. The cause referred and heard, but judgment overruled. His death and burial. The disinterment and burning his bones, falsely charged upon the Hugonots. His miracles and fame after death. His incomparable piety, zeal, and courage. His learning ; his style ; what contributed to the obscurity of it. What he borrowed from the Greeks. Abatements to be made for his odd opinions. His works, genuine and spurious.

ST. HILARY WAS BORN at Poitiers in France,^a anciently called

^a Hier. Præfat. in l. ii. com. in Gal. vol. iv. par. i. p. 255. Ven. Fortun. de S. Hil. in init.

Augustoritum, a prime city in the province of Aquitania Secunda; and at this day next in extent to Paris, an episcopal see, and an university, renowned for the study of the civil law. His parents (whose names antiquity has concealed from us) were persons of considerable rank and quality, and who accordingly gave him a liberal and generous education, evidently seen in the learning and eloquence that rendered him famous through the Christian world. He seems to have been bred up in the religion of the Gentiles, and to have been brought over to Christianity by the truest and most rational methods of conviction. For he tells us,^b that having seriously considered the folly and vanity of pagan idolatry, he began to think with himself, that the professors of this could never be competent tutors and guides to truth. Whereupon he set himself to contemplate the visible frame of things, and to conclude that the same power that made, must preserve and steer all things; that in an Almighty and incorruptible Being, there could be no sexes, no successive generations; that the author of all could have nothing without himself; and that omnipotency and eternity were necessary and incommunicable perfections of the divine nature, incapable of agreeing to any more than one. While he was engaged in these and such-like reflections, he met with the books of the Old Testament, wherein he was greatly surprised with that short, but comprehensive account of God, I AM THAT I AM. This put him upon further researches, and he was infinitely delighted with his speculations concerning the nature and perfections of God; to pursue the knowledge of whom, (so far as attainable,) he reckoned to be one of the most kindly offices he could perform to his great Creator. In this pursuit he was mightily encouraged by the natural sense he had of future rewards; and that it was not enough only to have right notions of God, unless there was a lively hope that good men should be happy in another life; and that it was an unworthy apprehension of God, to conceive that so noble a being as the soul of man, made to understand, adore, and enjoy its Maker, should expire with the last breath. From hence he proceeded to survey the revelation of the gospel, and so arrived to the knowledge of God the Son, and the great end and advantages of his coming into the world, the divinity of his person, and the great mystery of his incarnation; that he was

^b De Trinit. l. i. s. 3.

“God of God, the Word that was God, and that in the beginning was with God,” of the same nature, glory, and eternity with his Father, “the Word that was made flesh,” being both God and man in one person. Furnished with this accurate knowledge of the Christian doctrine, he was baptized; or, to use his own phrase,^c he was called by faith into the new nativity, and to obtain the heavenly regeneration, which he knew to be the pledge and assurance of a future and better life. And now he resigned up his understanding to the authority of divine truth, avoiding all captious and sophistical questions, and resolving the more sublime and intricate articles into the veracity and power of God; not peremptorily concluding that to be false, which his shallow capacity could not presently comprehend.

II. We have little account how he bestowed the former part of his life, only that he was married,^d and by his wife had one only daughter, called Abra, whom he took care to train up in all the principles of religion, and in the paths of piety and virtue. With his wife he cohabited even after his preferment to the episcopal function, as the more ingenuous of the Roman communion dare not deny,^e and that marriage was not then thought inconsistent with that office; nay, that married men were oftener chosen to it than single persons, who (as St. Jerome himself grants^f) were not so fit for the pastoral care as the other; but withal they tell us, that in those days the church had defined nothing in this matter. And surely had the church, I mean that of Rome, never made any such constitution, nor pressed the observance of it with so much rigour and importunity, the Christian world might have been free from infinite scandals and inconveniencies, which this one constitution of ecclesiastic celibacy has brought upon it. St. Hilary while yet a layman took not that liberty, which men of secular employments usually indulge themselves, but so carefully kept himself to the rules of ecclesiastic discipline, that he seemed to be particularly designed by heaven for some eminent dignity and authority in the church. He was

^c De Trinit. l. i. s. 12.

^d Ven. Fortun. in vit. S. Hilar. non longe ab init.

^e Vid. Gillot. Præf. ante opp. Hilarii. ed. 1572.

^f Quia isti non tam idonei curæ pastorali quam illi judicarentur. Hieron. ap. Gillot. loc. cit. Quasi non hodie quoque plurimi sacerdotes habeant matrimonia, et apostolus episcopum describat unius uxoris virum, habentem filios cum omni castitate. Hieron. l. i. ad Jovin. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 165. Eliguntur mariti in sacerdotium, non nego, quia non sunt tanti virgines, quanti necessarii sunt sacerdotes. Ibid. p. 175.

admirably strict in the government of his life, and true to the interests of the catholic faith, with the enemies whereof he would not eat; no, nor so much as salute them when he met them. A good part of his time he spent in instructing others, explaining to them the nature and principles of religion, and informing them in the right belief of the holy Trinity, otherwhiles persuading them to the virtues of a good life, by laying before them the infinite rewards of heaven and immortality: an employment that would be thought much below a gentleman in this loose and degenerate age.

III. This excellent temper and course of life, at the concurrent instance and importunity of the people, recommended him to the bishopric at Poitiers,^g wherein Baronius places him not till the year 355,^h without any other warrant, that I know of, than his own conjecture. For my part, I see no reason but to fix him there some years sooner, especially since he sometimes speaks of things as done several years before his banishment. Nor is his not being at the council of Arles (which the cardinal intimates) a sufficient argument that he was not then bishop, seeing there might be particular occasions of his absence at that time. One thing memorable he tells us of himself,ⁱ that for some time after his being bishop, he had never heard of the Nicene faith, (copies of it perhaps not being commonly dispersed in the Western parts, where the controversy started later,) though I suppose he means it of the nice and particular disputes about the *ὁμοούσιον* and *ὁμοιούσιον*: howbeit even then, he tells us, by conversing with the writings of the evangelists and apostles, he very well understood the thing itself, and the meaning of two so much controverted words, which he ever expounded in an orthodox sense. The fame of the man thus eminently seated, soon spread abroad, and filled not France only, but foreign parts with the report of his virtues, and invited him to be concerned in some of the most important affairs of the church. The Arian faction having pretty well subdued the East, were now attempting to erect their banners in the West. Constantius, after the overthrow of Magnentius, lay at Arles in France, anno 353, where they packed a synod, and partly by force, partly by smooth insinuations, partly by arts of falsehood and treachery, they

^g Vid. Fortun. in vit. S. Hilar.

^h Ad Ann. 355. num. 70.

ⁱ De Synod. s. 91.

carried the day; and drew in, not only Saturninus bishop of that city, (who thenceforward became a great bigot for the party,) but Vincentius, Pope Julius's own legate to that synod. Somewhat more than a year after, the emperor being removed to Milan, another synod (*Synagoga Malignantium*, as St. Hilary calls it, a synagogue or congregation of the wicked) is convened there, where they more openly prosecute their design; some they wrought upon by persuasives and fair pretences, and where they could not untie the knot, they cut it, banishing those that refused to condemn the Athanasian cause; in which number were Eusebius of Vercellæ, Lucifer of Calaris in Sardinia, and Dionysius of Milan; into whose place they thrust one Auxentius, a man composed of deceit and subtlety, a fit instrument to promote a bad cause.

IV. These rigorous and violent proceedings awakened the zeal and spirit of St. Hilary, who published hereupon a remonstrance to the emperor,^j wherein he lays before him the miserable state of the catholic party; humbly and passionately beseeches him to deliver them from the contempt and injuries of their brethren, and to command the governors of provinces not to proceed with fury and violence against innocent persons, or to meddle in causes not proper to them; to permit the people to enjoy their own bishops and pastors, and to offer up their joint prayers for his majesty's happiness and safety; and that he would recall those excellent persons whom he had banished, where liberty would be no less acceptable, than the joy would be universal. He tells him, that there had been Christians before Arius, whose faith was not vain, and who had "obtained the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls;" that it was but a little while since the plague of Arianism had infected the air of the Christian world; that its parent was known, and those who nursed it were of late date; the two Eusebiuses, Narcissus, Theodorus, Stephanus, Acacius, Menophantus, and especially those two forward youths Ursacius and Valens, who by letters and messages had barked and railed at those that differed from them, and by whips and gibbets, by chains and prisons, had endeavoured to rack men into a belief, and to compel them to become not Christians, but Arians; that to effect this, they had abused the imperial authority, and had imposed upon his majesty, persuading him,

^j Lib. ad Const. Aug. ext. op. ejus p. 1217.

under a pretence of religion, to deliver up his subjects into their hands, to be examined, condemned, and punished; yea, extorting connivance even from the common people: instances whereof were their actings in the late synods both of Arles and Milan. To this purpose was the address; and that such free and impartial dealing should not exasperate Constantius to send him the same way after his brethren, is (as Baronius not improbably guesses ^k) to be attributed to his unwillingness too much to disoblige the people in France, at this time especially, when those parts were overrun with invasions of the barbarous people. Nay, to sweeten the exasperated humour for the present, he published this following edict in favour of the bishops,^l against the usurpations of secular magistrates, who at every turn called them before them, judged matters of faith, and inflicted punishments upon the persons whom they had condemned, whereof St. Hilary had smartly complained in his late petition. The edict was as follows:

“ We forbid, by the law of our clemency, that bishops be questioned in civil courts, lest under pretence of avoiding that way of trial, which is presumed will be over-favourable to them, liberty should be given to men of evil minds, to bring them into trouble, and prefer indictments against them. If therefore any one have a complaint to make, it is expedient that the cause should be debated before other bishops, that so a fit and proper hearing may be given to all those charges that shall be preferred against them. Dated the 9th of the calends of Octob. Arbitio and Lollianus being consuls;” that is, Septemb. 23, Ann. Chr. 355.

Indeed Constantius was greatly startled at the news of the commotions in France, to quiet which, the best expedient that could be thought of was to create his cousin Julian Cæsar, and to send him with an army to reside in those parts, where he quickly drove out the Germans, and reduced the country into order.

V. The late transactions at Arles and Milan had highly offended the catholic bishops in France, insomuch that St. Hilary advising with the rest,^m it was unanimously agreed, to abstain

^k Ad Ann. 355. num. 82.

^l Cod. Theodos. Lib. xvi. Tit. ii. l. 12.

^m Hilar. lib. contra Const. s. 2.

from communion with Saturninus, Ursacius, and Valens, the prime sticklers of the faction, and to leave a liberty to the rest of the party to come in upon their repentance. Saturninus, a man proud and factious, of an ill temper, and worse morals, stomached it to be excommunicated by the bishops of his own province, and by his interest at court procured a synod to be held at Besiers near Arles, and all the neighbour-bishops to be summoned thither, hoping that in his own diocese, where he had so direct an influence, and by the countenance of the civil power, he might carry things to his own mind. The council met anno 356: but St. Hilary had his eyes open, and knowing how easy it was for the subtle faction, by smooth pretexts and their accustomed arts of dissimulation, to abuse the simplicity of his brethren, drew up an account of the true state of the case, wherein he laid open the impiety and villany of the Arian cause, which he presented to the synod. But they, not caring to hear on that ear, would not suffer it to be read, most of the prelates either complying, or at least conniving at what was done; only Rhodanius bishop of Toulouse stood his ground;ⁿ who being otherwise of a soft and easy temper, was kept upright merely by the spirit and courage of St. Hilary, whose company he kept, and whose advice he followed, and accordingly ran the same fortune with him. Saturninus saw now there was no hope of gaining our bishop of Poitiers, and therefore despatched messengers to court in the name of the synod,^o where, by false and sly insinuations, he traduced him to the emperor, from whom he obtained an order for his banishment; and, that he might be sent far enough out of the way, he was banished into Phrygia, a warrant being directed to Julian to put it into execution; and thereby he, as well as the emperor, was abused and imposed upon by those false suggestions: for so I understand that passage of St. Hilary,^p and not as Baronius,^q who thence infers that Julian had interceded for him with the emperor, and upon that account had been slandered and misrepresented by the Arians.

VI. Having disposed his affairs at home, and committed the government of his church to the care of his presbyters, he betook himself to the place of his exile, where he continued some

ⁿ Sulp. Sev. hist. sacr. l. ii. p. 154.

^o Hilar. de Synod. s. 2. Lib. i. ad Const. s. 2. Hier. de Script. in Hilar. c. 42.

^p Lib. ii. ad Const. s. 2.

^q Ad Ann. 355. num. 88.

years. Nor did he pass his time in softness and delicacy, but in prayers and tears, in cares and labours for the good of the church. For now it was,^f (though we cannot fix the particular year,) that he set upon that noble and elaborate work, of writing his twelve books Concerning the Trinity, wherein he has largely and accurately handled the whole controversy; and was the first, or at least one of the first, of the Latin church, that professedly undertook the defence and patronage of that argument against the subtle reasonings and impious assertions of the whole Arian faction. He wrote frequently into France,^g from all places whither he came, giving his friends an account what transactions were then on foot, what designs the Arians were driving on, what counsels he and his brethren, the Eastern bishops, had entertained for the interest and security of the catholic cause. Nor was he unmindful of his private concerns, and the affairs of his family, if we may believe what is reported by one of his successors in that see.^h For, understanding that his daughter Abra (whom he had left at Poitiers with her mother) was importunately desired in marriage by a young gentleman of good accomplishments and great estate, he wrote a letter to her to dissuade her from it, assuring her that he had provided her a husband, whose birth and nobility was beyond any human race, whose beauty outdid the lily and the rose, whose eyes sparkled like diamonds, whose garments were whiter than the snow, whose wisdom was incomprehensible, riches inestimable and indefectible, and his chastity pure and uncorrupt; persuading her, in short, to devote herself entirely to the service of Christ, a match, he told her, which he would accomplish at his return, and that in the mean time she should lay aside the thoughts of any other nuptials. And a letter is extant,ⁱ which, my author (who wrote this about the year 559) tells us, was kept as a monument at Poitiers, wherein he declares this at large, as represented to him in a vision, and presses her to expect his return, when he would more clearly unriddle and unfold it to her; sending her withal a divine hymn to be used at her morning and evening devotions, referring her for any thing less intelligible in them to the instructions of her mother, whose great desire it was, by an excellent example, to form and train her up to a

^f Vid. lib. x. de Trin. s. 4.

^h Vid. Fortun. de Vit. Hilar. ubi supra.

^g De Synod. in initio.

ⁱ Ap. Fortun. loc. citat.

divine life. The letter and hymn are still extant, which being both of suspected credit, we shall not here insert.

VII. Towards the end of the year 358, a rumour being spread,^w that a synod was to be held at Ancyra in the East, and another at Ariminum in the West, and that two bishops, or one at least, were to be summoned out of every province in France, he took care to inform them of the true state of things. He had of late, from their long continued silence, began to suspect that they had warped aside, and gone along with the stream, and had entertained the confession agreed upon, and subscribed by Hosius in the late Arian convention at Sirmium: but, at last, their letters came, which cleared all his doubts, assuring him, that they continued firm to the catholic interest, owned his cause, and still refused communion with Saturninus of Arles; that the Sirmian confession had indeed been sent them, but that they had not only rejected, but condemned it, entreating him to send them an account of what confessions of faith had of late years been passed in the Eastern parts. This he presently did in his book *de Synodis*, wherein he set down the most considerable confessions that had been made since the great council of Nice, which he translated out of Greek, and explained and illustrated with his own comment upon them; and amongst other things, discourses concerning the so much bandied expressions of *ὁμοούσιον* and *ὁμοιούσιον*, shewing, that if men were of sincere and honest minds, they might be both expounded into a very sound sense; but that to avoid the danger of dissimulation; and out of reverence to the fathers of Nice, it was best to keep to the term *ὁμοούσιος* or *consubstantial*, there being no just reason why the Arians should except against it; that therefore he besought them to remain inviolable in that belief, and to recommend his cause in their prayers to heaven.

VIII. He had now continued somewhat more than three years in banishment, when to answer the council held at Ariminum in Italy, a synod was called at Seleucia in Isauria, to which he was summoned amongst the rest,^x not by any particular direction from the emperor, but by the command of Leonas the treasurer, and Lauricius the president of Isauria, to whose care the emperor had committed that affair; from whom he received safe conduct, and the benefit of public carriage.

^w Vid. lib. de Synod. s. 8, etc.

^x Sulp. Sev. l. ii. c. 42.

In this journey thither,^y (take it upon the credit of my author,) as he passed by a certain garrison, he went on the Lord's day into the temple there, when immediately a heathen maid, called Florentia, breaking through the crowd, cried aloud, that a servant of God was come amongst them, and fell down at his feet, importunately beseeching him that she might be signed with the sign of the cross: whose example her father Florentius following, was, together with his whole family, baptized into the Christian faith. Nor was the maid satisfied with this, but taking leave of her parents, followed him in all his travels, and attended him to his own house at Poitiers, saying, that herein she thought herself more obliged to her spiritual, than to her natural father. Being arrived at Seleucia, he was gladly received by those few catholic bishops that were there, but rejected by the rest, till he had cleared an imputation laid upon him. For the Arians, before his coming, had traduced him and the churches of France, as guilty of Sabellianism, or of maintaining Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be but three several names of the same God. But having wiped off this, and given them an account of the faith professed by the Gallic churches, agreeably to the Nicene creed, he was admitted into the council. The grand question debated in the synod, was concerning the *ὁμοούσιον*, and the *ὁμοιούσιον*, and the *ἀνόμοιον*, or Son's dissimilitude to the Father, fiercely contested between two contending parties, the one headed by Acacius bishop of Cæsarea, the other by George of Laodicea, who were the far greater and more moderate party. There were not many stood by the *ὁμοούσιον* besides St. Hilary, and the few Egyptian bishops of Athanasius's side; for the others, the debates flew high, there wanting not those that affirmed,^z that nothing could in substance be like to God, that in the divine nature there could be no generation, and that Christ was a creature; that upon the account of his creation, he was said to be born, but that he was made of nothing, and consequently was neither Son, nor like to God. Nay, what was the excess of blasphemy and profaneness, it was there publicly averred to have been preached at Antioch, that in the Godhead there was neither Father nor Son, and that if there were, it necessarily inferred, that there must be a female partner, and all consequent acts and instruments of generation.

^y Vid. Fortun. in vit. Hilar.

^z Hilar. lib. contr. Const. s. 12.

At the hearing whereof, and other the like stuff, the synod began to ferment into great tumult and disorder. The Anomæans, considering that Christian ears would never brook such impious and extravagant assertions, drew up a form of belief, that condemned the doctrine of dissimilitude. Which seeming strange to the assembly, St. Hilary asked one, who was set upon him to feel how he stood affected, what was the meaning, that they who had positively denied the Son to be either of the same or like substance with the Father, should now condemn the doctrine of his being unlike to God? He was answered, that Christ was not like to God, but to the Father. The answer made the thing more obscure and intricate than before: till upon a second inquiry the other thus explained himself, that when he affirmed the Son to be unlike to God, but like to the Father, he meant, that it was the will of the Father to make such a creature, which should will the like things that he did, and that in that regard he was like the Father, being the Son not of his nature but his will: but that he was unlike to God, being neither God, nor of God, that is, not begotten of the substance of the Father. St. Hilary was infinitely surprised and amazed hereat, nor could believe it to be spoken in earnest, till he was publicly assured, that it was the sense of the whole party, all the Homoiousians expressing a most vehement abhorrency and detestation of it. The conclusion was, that the Acacian party and their form was rejected and condemned, and the confession made twenty years since, in the council at Antioch, (wherein was no mention of the Son's consubstantiality,) approved and ratified.

IX. The synod being dissolved, ten legates were despatched to court,^a whom St. Hilary followed to Constantinople; not that the emperor had commanded him to repair thither, but that he resolved to attend his majesty's pleasure, whether he should return home or back again into banishment. At his coming to court, he found the catholic faith going down the wind apace, the Western prelates in the synod at Ariminum imposed upon, and vexed into compliance, and the Orientalists forced to go the same way; whereupon he presented three several petitions to the emperor, that he might have leave to come into his presence, and to defend the faith against its antagonists and opposers;

^a Sulp. Sev. c. 42, 45. et Ven. Fortun. in vit. Hilar.

but this the Arians would by no means agree to. This denied, he presented a discourse,^b (which he seems to have pronounced in the emperor's presence,) wherein, having first begged a favourable audience, he vindicates his own innocency against the attempts and insinuations of his enemies; complains of the unhappy state of religion at that time; that new creeds were multiplied so fast, that the faith was lost in a crowd of confessions, and was shaped according to the humour of the age, not according to the truth of the gospel; that they were the bravest men that could produce a creed of the newest and the freshest date, and most roundly denounce an anathema against those that differed from them: *Annuas, atque menstruas de Deo fides decernimus*, "Admirable stewards," says he, "of divine and invisible mysteries, we compose new creeds every year, yea, every month: we make decrees, and then recall them; defend them, and then anathematize those that do so; either in our own, we condemn others, or in sentencing others, we condemn our own; and while 'we bite one another, we are devoured one of another.'" In these acute reflections he spends a good part of his oration, managing the argument with great salt and smartness: and whereas his majesty required a faith agreeable to the divine revelations, he besought him to give him leave to discourse awhile before him and the synod (then assembled at Constantinople, and torn in pieces with heats and animosities) concerning the faith out of the holy scriptures, and to undertake the cause of Christ, whose bishop he was, and for whose sake he now suffered banishment; and this the rather, because the worst of heretics pretended to derive their impious and blasphemous belief out of the scriptures: whereas the scriptures lie not in the letter but the sense; and become useful not barely by reading, but by understanding; and are understood not by subtlety, but by love and charity. And that he might give him a specimen of what he would discourse on before so great an assembly, and upon so famous and controverted an argument, and what he hoped would turn to the honour of his reign, the glory of the faith, and the peace and settlement both of the Eastern and Western churches, he concludes with a brief account of his faith, that faith which he had received at his baptism, and which was according to the doctrine of the gospel.

^b Lib. ii. ad Const. s. 1.

X. What effect this discourse had, is uncertain. Baronius conceives it was altogether without success,^c and that now looking upon the case as desperate, he backed it with another, wherein laying aside all mild and gentle persuasives, he proceeds in ruder and rougher methods; and that this was no other than that discourse still extant,^d which in the title is said to have been written against "Constantius after his death;" which inscription he pretends is false, and that the discourse was presented to Constantius himself at this time, induced hereunto by no other argument, but because in it St. Hilary says, it was now the fifth year from the time that he separated from communion with Saturninus and his party, which (says he) falls in exactly with this year. But whoever considers, with what intolerable sharpness and severity (to say no worse) he treats the emperor in that discourse, how in his transports of zeal he styles him Antichrist, (and justifies it too from scripture,) fighter against God, the new enemy of Christ, the destroyer of religion, a tyrant in the things of God, a persecutor beyond the rage of Nero, Decius, or Maximian, the wickedest of men, with much more to that purpose, must needs think that no man of a far greater patience than Constantius would have endured to have been told so to his face, and that such an address could not have been made at less cost than the price of his head; and consequently must conclude, either that he suppressed it during his life, or (which is most probable) wrote it after his death, in the beginning of Julian's reign, when a man might, if not with encouragement, at least with safety, talk at that rate. Nor is the objection from the time much material, seeing Constantius died the very next year after, nor can the precise time be fixed, when Hilary and the French prelates first abstained from communion with Saturninus, so that a quarter or half a year may contribute not a little to the salving of this matter.

XI. But be it as it will, this is certain, that the Arians grew weary of St. Hilary; they found him a man of stomach and courage, and one whom a mighty zeal inspired with an indefatigable industry and diligence, and therefore, to be rid of his company, persuaded the emperor to let him go home; whereupon he is commanded to be gone,^e as a sower of discord, and the

^c Ad Ann. 360. num. 3. et seq.

^d Oper. Hilar. p. 1237.

^e Sulp. Sever. l. ii. c. 45.

great troubler of the East. He made no great haste in his return to France, staying in most places by the way, especially in Illyricum and Italy, where he confirmed the catholic faith, strengthened the weak, resolved the scrupulous, and mightily convinced gainsayers, wherever he came. And here it was that Eusebius of Vercellæ,^f who returned in the beginning of Julian's reign, overtook him, found him employed, and joined with him in this excellent work. Amongst all his friends, none more earnestly desired, or impatiently expected his return, than St. Martin, who was afterwards bishop of Tours. He was a person of good descent, and from a child brought up with his father in the camp, and served in the wars under Julian. At ten years of age he left his parents, and the pagan religion, wherein he had been brought up, fled to the church, and became a catechumen; at eighteen he was baptized, but continued still his military life, till very hardly gaining his dismissal from Julian, he went to Poitiers to St. Hilary,^g with whom he lived some time before his exile. The good bishop was infinitely pleased with the temper and conversation of the man, and resolved to gain him to the service of the church, and frequently attempted to invest him with the office of deacon. But the modesty and humility of the man made him deaf to all persuasions, till St. Hilary, considering there was no better way to catch him, than to propound a place that might look like a debasement and degrading of him, put him upon undertaking the office of the exorcist, which he complied with, that he might not seem to slight it as too mean an employment. Troubles increasing upon him by means of the Arian faction, after St. Hilary's departure, he went into Italy, and set up a monastery at Milan, where he met with no better usage from Auxentius the Arian bishop; thence he fled, with one only companion, to a private island called Gallinaria, where he led a most severe and pious life. Having now heard that St. Hilary was coming home, he went as far as Rome to meet him, but missing of him, followed him immediately into France; and in a place near Poitiers erected a monastery, where he lived, till some years after he was created bishop of Tours.

XII. St. Hilary entered Poitiers in a kind of triumph,^h no-

^f Sozom. lib. v. c. 13. Rufin. l. i. c. 30, 31.

^g Sulp. Sever. de vit. B. Martin. c. 5. Vid. Fortun. in vit. Hilari.

^h Fortun. *ibid.*

thing was seen but expressions of joy; his presence put a new life into the people, who seemed half dead while he was from them. As soon as his affairs were a little settled at home, he began to look about him, and to see how he might compose the public distractions in those churches, and it was no more than what the state of those times did importunately call for. The artifices that had been used in the synod at Ariminum, had involved almost all the bishops of the West in the guilt of Arian compliance; the natural effect whereof was distrust and quarrels, divisions and separations, the sound shunned the infected, and one man refused to converse and communicate with another. And what yet added to the unhappiness of things was, that when some were willing to own their fault, others were unwilling to receive them. And thus stood affairs at St. Hilary's return,ⁱ who was doubtful at first what course to take; many affirming, that no communion was to be held with any that had approved the transactions at Ariminum, who were to be rejected as heathens and publicans. But the good bishop was for the more gentle and mild opinion, and thought it better, in imitation of the divine compassions, to reduce men back to repentance and reformation. To this end he procured synods to be convened in several parts of France, where the question was debated, and the matter brought to an issue; the bishops that had been ensnared in the council at Ariminum,^k flocked from all parts, and declared, that whatever they might be accounted, their consciences did not charge them with heresy; protesting by the blessed sacrament, and all that is holy and sacred, that they did not suspect any ill design in what they had done; that they thought men's minds and words had agreed together; and that in the church, where nothing but simplicity and the confession of truth should take place, there should never have been found one thing in the heart, and another in the tongue; that they had entertained a good opinion of bad men, and that that had betrayed them; and that they could never have believed that Christ's commanders should have fought against him: all which they acknowledged with tears and sorrow, and professed themselves ready to revoke their former subscriptions, and to condemn the whole body of the Arian blasphemies. And so the matter went on smoothly,

ⁱ Sulp. Sev. hist. sacr. l. ii. c. 45.

^k Hieron. adv. Lucifer. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 301.

and the penitent prelates were received and restored. The only person that made any considerable opposition, was Saturninus of Arles, whose obstinacy and impiety not being curable by any other means, was to undergo the last and severest remedy. St. Hilary having received letters out of the East, letting him know how generally they acquiesced in those confessions, wherein the words *substance* and *consubstantial* were omitted, a synod was called at Paris, wherein they returned a synodical answer to the Eastern bishops,¹ and therein express a just resentment of the frauds and subtleties that had been used in all late conventions, to divide the opinions of the East and West, and to lay aside those well-contrived expressions, that had been purposely taken up to obviate heresy; that for themselves they had always owned the *ὁμοούσιον*, according to which they there largely explain their belief concerning the Son's godhead and divinity; that this was the faith which they had ever hitherto, and would still maintain, in opposition both to the errors of Sabellius on the one hand, and Arius on the other; that according to their desires they held excommunicate Auxentius, Ursacius, Valens, Gaius, Megacius, and Justin; and that their brother Hilary had openly declared he would have no peace with any of their party; that they did condemn all those blasphemous assertions, which had been sent together with their letters, and did more peculiarly refuse converse with any that had invaded the sees of the banished bishops; solemnly promising, that if any in France offered to oppose these determinations, they would depose him, and banish him all communion.

XIII. In this, or at least some preceding synod, (for they mention it in their letter,) Saturninus was accused, not only of heresy, but of great misdemeanors in his life and manners; and continuing obstinate, was excommunicated by all the bishops in France; and was no sooner thus taken off, but the rest struck sail, and were admitted, upon professing their repentance. To one of these synods also must be referred, (were there any truth in it,) that trick which Rufinus tells us was put upon St. Hilary;^m that one of his books having, after the council of Ariminum, been secretly corrupted by some Arian hand, he was now, in a convention of bishops, questioned about his sentiments

¹ Ext. ap. Hilar. fragm. xi. Baron. ad Ann. 362.

^m Ap. Hieron. Apol. adv. Rufin. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 415.

in that matter, and his own book appealed to as evidence in that case. The book is sent for, and the places found so as was represented, and he thereupon condemned of heresy, and excommunicated, and as such forced to depart the synod. This is the story, which St. Jerome cries out upon as a most notorious figment; challenging Rufinus to produce his author, to name the place where such a synod was holden, what bishops were present, and who for or against it; under what consuls, and by what emperor it had been summoned; whether they were only French, or Spanish and Italian prelates; and what was the occasion of the assembly. I am loth to have so bad an opinion of Rufinus, as to think he purely forged and contrived the story. For *cui bono?* What end could he serve in it? Not to mention the palpable violence that he must needs offer to his own conscience. Perhaps something tending that way might have been spread by the malice of the faction, and the thing improved by going from hand to hand; or St. Hilary's enemies might have sentenced him in some of their clancular assemblies, and Rufinus meeting the report, heedlessly took it up, and it may be added some circumstances to make it out. Sure I am, the men of the Luciferian schism severely condemned St. Hilary for his lenity and indulgence to the penitent bishops;ⁿ that he had abated the edge of his zeal, and was become a patron of heretics and apostates, whom before he had so happily confuted by his eloquent writings. But whether this, or any such-like occasion, gave birth to the story, or whether there was any foundation at all of truth in it, I shall not further take upon me to decide.

XIV. Thus, by the care and industry of this great man, things were tolerably pacified in the West, and so continued for some years, when Auxentius of Milan, who had been often deposed and excommunicated by the Catholics, had by arts of hypocrisy and dissimulation so far wrought himself into the favour of the emperor Valentinian, as to obtain an edict from him for the quiet possession of his see: which coming to St. Hilary's ears, he resolved upon a journey to Milan, on purpose to uncase the fox, and to disabuse the well-meaning emperor. At his arrival at court,^o he immediately fell upon Auxentius, whom he charged with blasphemy, and with believing otherwise than he had made

ⁿ Vid. Marcell. et Faust. lib. precum; ap. Sirmondi opp. vol. i. p. 235.

^o Hilar. lib. adv. Auxent. c. 13, etc.

the emperor and the world believe. Valentinian, moved with the address of so venerable a person, referred the cause to the hearing of the treasurer, and the master of the palace, who had ten bishops as assessors with them. At first Auxentius excepted against the person of his accuser, that he ought not to be heard as a bishop, who had been heretofore condemned by Saturninus. But the court overruled this plea, and resolved, as the emperor had ordered, to proceed directly to matters of faith. And here Auxentius found himself pinched, and not knowing where to get out, roundly professed he believed Christ to be true God, and to be of one and the same substance and divinity with God the Father. This confession was entered upon record, and St. Hilary prevailed with the treasurer to present a copy to the emperor. Indeed, Auxentius denied all that was charged upon him; and in his libel or petition to the emperor,^p endeavours a full vindication of his faith, complaining of Hilary and some others for branding him for an heretic, and raising all that clamour and trouble against him. And though, as St. Hilary observes, he did but dissemble in his most orthodox assertions, eluding all by subtle distinctions and mental reservations, yet by these plausible pretences he kept up his reputation with the emperor and the people, who owned and conversed with him as a most catholic bishop. St. Hilary urged, that all this was but scene and fiction; that he still denied the faith, and did but mock God and man; but the emperor bade him surcease any further prosecution, and commanded him to be gone. So he was forced to return home, laden with nothing but the satisfaction of an honest and well-meant design.

XV. Whether this disappointment made any such impression upon his mind, as to hasten sickness upon him; or whether merely worn out with age and infirmities, and the many troubles and sufferings he had undergone, is hard to say. It is certain, that not long after his coming home, he departed this life, six years (says Severus^q) after his return from exile; but that is impossible: St. Jerome,^r nearer the truth, places it Ann. Chr. 368. But it is plain, it could not at soonest be till the following year, when he returned from Milan, at what time (as appears from Auxentius's epistle to the emperor) it was ten years since the

^p Ext. in Hilar. opp. p. 317. ed. 1572.

^q Lib. ii. c. 45.

^r Chron. ad Ann. 368.

council at Ariminum, which was holden anno 359. He died January the 13th, which therefore the Western church has consecrated to his memory; and was buried in his own church, with this epitaph,^s we are told, written on his tomb, but savouring of the poetry of a later age.

Hilarius cubat hac Pictavus episcopus urna,
 Defensor nostræ terrificus fidei.
 Istius aspectum serpentes ferre nequibant,
 Nescio quæ in vultu spicula sanctus habet.

I find it reported by authors of great name in the church of Rome,^t that during the civil wars in France, anno 1562, the Hugonots, amongst other insolences, broke open the grave of this venerable prelate, took out his bones, and having burned them, threw the ashes into the river: a most impudent calumny stiffly disowned by Protestants,^u as destitute of all colour and pretence of truth. Nor is it mentioned by any of the wiser and more judicious persons of that church; no, not by those who are wont to catch all opportunities of bespattering and reproaching Protestants, such as Possevin, Labbe, &c. Not the least hint of any such thing in the great Thuanus, even where he mentions the greatest extravagances of that kind committed in those times. But why stand I to disprove what never was? St. Hilary is greatly famed for miracles, said to have been done by him, which they that are curious may find in Gregory bishop of Tours,^w Peter Damian,^x and especially in Vincentius Fortunatus,^y one of his own successors, who, had he been as careful to transmit to posterity the particular notices of his life, (whereof he has given us a very dry and barren account,) as he has been to record the miracles, said to be wrought by him, after his death, had much more obliged us to be thankful to his memory. The great church at Poitiers is dedicated to him; it was heretofore an abbey, and is now a collegiate church, and has this peculiar honour, that the kings of France are successively heads or abbots of it. He is the protector or tutelar guardian of the city, in the midst whereof is a column erected to him with this inscription:

^s Ext. ap. Gillot, Præfat. in Hilar. ex. Cod. Vet.

^t Bellarm. de reliq. SS. c. 1. Sur. Hist. ad Ann. 1562.

^u Vid. Scult. Medul. patrum in Hilar. p. 1258. ed. 1572.

^w De Mirac. Martyr. l. ii. c. 2.

^x Serm. 150.

^y De vit. S. Hilar. l. ii.

DIVO HILARIO. URBIS PROPUGNATORI.
 FIDELISSIMO. ASSIDUISSIMO.
 CERTISSIMO.
 PICTAVORUM EPISCOPO.

XVI. He was a man of more than common severity of life, in all the passages whereof, and indeed in all his writings, there breathes an extraordinary vein of piety: he solemnly appeals to God,² that he looked upon this as the great work and business of his life, to employ all his faculties, of speaking, of reason, and understanding, to declare God to the world, and either to inform the ignorant or reduce the erroneous. He had a great veneration for truth, in the search whereof he refused no pains or study; and in the pursuit of it, was acted by a mighty zeal; and in the defence of it, used a freedom and liberty of speech, that sometimes transported him beyond the bounds of decency; as is too evident (not to name other instances) in his addresses to, and the character he gives of Constantius, wherein he lets loose the reins not to zeal, but to rage and passion, and treats him with a liberty far from being consistent with duty to governors, or indeed justifiable by the common rules of prudence and civility: his hearty concernment for religion, meeting with the vigour and frankness of his temper, the natural genius of his country, made him sometimes forget that reverence that was due to superiors, though otherwise he was of a very sweet gentle temper. No considerations, either of hope or fear, could bias him one hair's breadth from the rule of the catholic faith: he underwent banishment with as unconcerned a mind as another man takes a journey of pleasure; he was not moved with the tediousness of his journeys, the hardships of his exile, or the barbarity of the country whither he went; he knew he had to deal with potent and malicious enemies, and that were wont to imbrue their hands in blood; but he carried his life in his hand, and dared at any time to look death in the face. He tells us,^a that would he have been content to satisfy and betray the truth, he might have enjoyed his peace and pleasure, the favour and friendship of the emperor, places of power and grandeur in the church, and have flowed in all the pomps and advantages of secular greatness. But he had a soul elevated above the offers of this world; and truth was infinitely dearer to him than

² De Trin. l. i. c. 17.

^a Pref. ad fragm.

liberty or life itself. He was acted by a true spirit of martyrdom, and seems to have desired nothing more, than that he might have sealed his faith and his religion with his blood. He wishes he had lived in the times of the Neronian or Decian persecutions,^b that he might have borne his testimony to the truth of God; that he would neither have feared the rack, nor been afraid of the flames, nor have shunned the cross, nor startled, if thrown to the bottom of the sea. And in the conclusion of his book to the bishops of France, he tells them,^c he knew not whether it would be more welcome to him to return home to them, or safe for him to die (where he then was) in exile. In fine, he was to the West what Athanasius was in the East, the great Atlas and support of the catholic cause, to which he stood firm and constant, when all the rest of the bishops sunk into an unwarrantable compliance and prevarication. And the historian records it to his honour,^d as a thing universally known and granted, that by his alone care and diligence France had been delivered both from the infection and the guilt of heresy.

XVII. His learning was as considerable as those parts of the world could furnish him with. That he was not skilled in Hebrew (which St. Jerome more than once charges upon him^e) is no wonder: Jewish learning was rare in those days, and especially in the Western parts. His living so many years in the East, had given him some acquaintance with the Greek, though he never attained an accuracy and perfection in that language, as is evident, amongst other instances, by his translations extant at this day. He principally applied himself to theological studies, and to examine the controversies of those times, wherein, though consisting of very nice and intricate speculations, he became a great master, and was one of the first amongst the Latins that openly undertook to explain and defend the catholic faith. His style, like the genius of the French language at that time, is turgid and lofty; which therefore St. Jerome compares to the Rhone,^f not so much for the copiousness, as for the quickness and rapidness of that river. His phrases are affected, his periods

^b Lib. contr. Const. s. 4. ^c De Synod. in fin. ^d Sulp. Sever. l. ii. c. 45.

^e Epist. ad Marcell. vol. ii. p. 713. Qu. in Gen. ibid. p. 507. Epist. ad Damas. vol. iv. par. i. p. 145.

^f Præf. in lib. ii. Comm. in Galat. vol. iv. par. i. p. 255. Vid. Epist. xlix. ad Paulin. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 507.

long, and his discourses intricate, and not easily intelligible, and which oft require a second and attentive reading. So that his language, though eloquent in its kind, is not chaste and genuine; it being true, what Erasmus not impertinently observes upon this occasion,^g that the Roman provincials (some few only excepted who were brought up at Rome) seldom or never attained the purity and simplicity of the Latin tongue, but betray an over-anxious affectation of eloquence, a thing incident to all those who are naturalized into, rather than natives of any language, and who seldom fail of tincturing, or rather infecting their style with the peculiar idiotisms of their own country. Two things concurred to render him less perspicuous: the abstruseness of the subjects that he manages, being generally so sublime as not to admit a clear and easy explication; and his humour of frequently intermixing Greek idioms, and phrases borrowed from a foreign language, which he endeavours to set off with an operose and elaborate greatness and sublimity of style, (very familiar to the French writers of that age,) attended with frequent repetitions, studied transitions, and over-nice apologies and interruptions, which cannot but render him somewhat obscure to vulgar and superficial readers. All which he especially discovers in his books *de Trinitate*; wherein he seems to set himself to club the whole strength of his wit, parts, and eloquence, to manage that noble argument with all possible advantage, wherein (it is St. Jerome's observation^h) he imitated Quintilian both in the style and number of his books. Indeed, his affected subtlety, and exquisite care of words and sentences, resemble the humour of that Roman orator, though it was an ill-chosen copy to write after, in so nice and sublime an argument. In his comments on the Psalms, and St. Matthew, wherein he is more concise and short, he borrowed the sense from Origen,ⁱ which he clothed with his own expressions, and many times added of his own; though in this work his friend Heliodorus, to whom he trusted to render the propriety of the Greek phrases, and the more difficult places, sometimes imposed upon him, dictating his own sense instead of Origen's, which the

^g Epist. Præf. opp. S. Hilar. et inter Epist. l. xxviii. ep. 8.

^h Epist. lxxxiii. ad Magn. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 657.

ⁱ Hier. Apol. adv. Rufin. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 351. Epist. xxxvi. adv. Vigil. ibid. p. 276. De Script. in Hilar.

other swallowed without discerning. His notes upon the Psalms, with his book *de Synodis*, St. Jerome tells us^k he himself transcribed for him with his own hand, at what time he lay at Triers in Germany. His other writings yet extant are commonly known, and we have taken notice of as they came in our way. His odd and peculiar notions and opinions have been sufficiently discussed by others, for which there will be little reason to bear hard upon his memory, when it is considered, that the controverted articles were but newly started, and not sufficiently explained; that he lived far from the scene of action, and after his coming upon the public stage, was harassed all his life with the heats and controversies of that age. To conclude, he was learned, eloquent, and judicious, a man of quick parts and sound reason, a catholic bishop, and, what is more, a pious and good man.

^k Epist. iv. ad Florent. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 6.

His Writings.

Genuine.

De Trinitate, libri duodecim.
 Adversus Constantium vita functum liber.
 Ad eundem Imperatorem, liber.
 Ad eundem, liber.
 Adversus Arianos et Auxentium, liber; cui
 subjungitur Auxentii ad Imp. Epistola.
 De Synodis adv. Arianos.
 Fragmenta ex opere Historico de Synodis,
 libri duo.
 Commentarii in Evangelium S. Matt.
 Commentarii in Psalmos.

Spurious.

Epistola ad Augustinum.
 Epistola alia ad eundem.

Carmen in Genesim.

Epistola ad Abram filiam.

Liber de Patris et Filii unitate, et alter de
 essentia Patris et Filii, sunt Centones ex
 lib. de Trinitate consuti.

Not Extant.

Tractatus in Job.

Comment. in Cantica Canticorum.

Historia Ariminensis et Seleuciensis Synod.
 adv. Valent. et Ursac.

Adv. Salustium præfectum, seu Dioscurum
 Medicum.

Liber Hymnorum.

Liber Mysteriorum.

Epistolæ plures.

THE LIFE OF SAINT BASIL, BISHOP OF CÆSAREA IN CAPPADOCIA.

SECTION I.

HIS ACTS FROM HIS BIRTH TILL HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO HOLY ORDERS.

His birth-place. The eminency of his ancestors. Their sufferings under the Maximinian persecution. The miraculous provision made for them. His parents, and their great piety and virtue. His education under his grandmother Macrina. His foreign improvements in several schools and universities. His removal to Athens. The manner of initiating young students in that university. The dear intimacy between him and Nazianzen. His victory over the captious Sophists. His tutors, and their great fame and eminency. His and Nazianzen's joint studies, and strict deportment. His quitting the university, and settling at Antioch under the tutorage of Libanius. Deserting the oratory, he betakes himself to the study of theology. His frequent converse with the writings of Origen. His travels into Egypt and other parts. The high esteem Julian had of him, and the frequent letters that passed between them. His acute repartee to Julian's censure. A pretended letter of his to Julian, in favour of image-worship, shewn to be spurious. Julian's great severity to the Christians at Cæsarea, and upon what occasion.

ST. BASIL (whose incomparable learning and piety universally entitled him to the surname of Great) was by birth a Cappadocian, (taking the word in its larger signification,) born in Pontus, where it is plain his father lived,¹ and whence all his paternal ancestors were descended. And here some fix his nativity at Helenopontus, an obscure town in that country; indeed so obscure, that I find no such place in any writer of that time. For though Constantine the Great gave that title to one of those provinces in honour of his mother Helena, yet I believe no city of that name was at this time in being, whatever might be afterwards. I conjecture him therefore born at Neocæsarea, which though reckoned to Cappadocia at large, (in

¹ Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. (in S. Basil.) p. 318, 324.

which sense it reached to the very shore of the Pontic sea, and this the ancients called the Greater Cappadocia,^t) was yet *Ποντική πόλις*,^u a city of Pontus, yea the metropolis of the Pontus Polemoniæus. And I the rather conceive him born here, or at least hereabouts, because it is certain his grandmother Macrina lived here, and here he himself was educated from his very childhood,^v and here spent a good part of his after-life. He was descended, both by father and mother's side,^w of an ancient and honourable race, persons equally celebrated for nobility and virtue; such as had been famous both in court and camp, and had borne the highest honours and offices of their country; but above all, were renowned for their piety and their sufferings, and their constant and undaunted profession of religion. Under the Maximinian persecution, one of the last, but hottest efforts of declining paganism, and which made all that preceded seem humane and gentle, his paternal ancestors, to avoid the fury of the storm, fled to one of the woody mountains of Pontus, not doubting but to find better quarter from the most wild and savage creatures there, than by staying at home to encounter with beasts in the shape of men. Here they continued near seven years, banished from the comfort and society of friends, (a thing strange to them who had been wont to be crowded with a train of attendants and followers,) and exposed to hunger and cold, to rain and storms, and to all the hardships of a barren and disconsolate place: and all this the more insupportable, because falling upon persons whose tender and delicate education had made them strangers to the pressures of want and hardship; till at length coarse fare and hard lodging had so far impaired their health, as to make them desirous of some refreshments more suitable and grateful to the appetites of weakened and decayed nature, wherewith they knew God could, if he pleased, easily furnish them. And the Divine Providence, which is never wanting in necessaries, is wont sometimes, though at the expense of a miracle, to gratify his servants with delicacies. And thus it happened here, for on a sudden an herd of fat deer came out of the thicket, and volun-

^t Const. Porphyr. Them. Orient. ii.

^u Steph. in v. *Νεοκαισ.* Am. Marcell. l. xxvii. c. 12.

^v Bas. Epist. ccx. ad prim. Neocæs. s. 1.

^w Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 318, 319, etc. Vid. Suid. in v. *Βασίλειος.*

tarily offered themselves to the knife, following the persons they met, without any other force than the direction of a nod. Being brought to the place of their abode, they stood still, till as many as were thought convenient were chosen out, and the rest being dismissed, quietly returned back into the woods. A feast was hereupon immediately prepared, and our poor hunger-starved confessors liberally treated, who thankfully owned the bounty of heaven, and looked upon it as an encouragement and obligation to go on cheerfully with their portion of sufferings that were yet behind. But leaving them, let us come nearer home. His immediate parents were not more famous for their mutual kindness, than for their charity to the poor, their hospitality towards strangers, the devoting a constant part of their estate to God, their abstinence and fasting, and all the virtues of a good life, all which God was pleased to crown with a numerous and hopeful issue. His father's name was Basil,^x a man prudent and religious, and of great name and authority in his country, whom Possevine^y and some others, without any authority that I know of, will have in his latter days to have been a bishop; and the centuriators are so confident of it,^z as to cite Nazianzen for their author, who yet says no such thing: his mother was Emmelia, a woman of strict conduct, and rare accomplishments; so exquisite and celebrated a beauty, that she was on all hands solicited for marriage, and some so far transported, as to be ready to attempt by force, what they could not carry by milder and more soft addresses.

II. The product of this happy marriage was our St. Basil, their eldest son, and (if I mistake not) their second child; a youth of a goodly and promising aspect, the index of a more pregnant wit and ingenuous mind. His first studies were conducted under the discipline of his own father,^a who was careful to instruct him in all the rudiments of learning, and especially to season him with right notions of religion, and to train him up to a course of piety, which he equally promoted both by his lectures and his life. But herein none more industrious or serviceable than his mother Emmelia,^b and especially his aged

^x Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 321. Nyss. de vit. Macrin. vol. ii. p. 178.

^y In V. Basil. Vid. Labb. de Script. in Addend. ad vol. i. p. 737.

^z Cent. iv. c. 10.

^a Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 324. Amphiloc. vit. Bas. c. 1.

^b Basil. Epist. cciv. ad Neocæs. s. 6. Epist. ccxxiii. adv. Eust. Sebast. s. 3.

grandmother Macrina. She had sometimes been auditor of the famous St. Gregory Thaumaturgus bishop of Neocæsarea, by whom she had been educated in the principles of the catholic faith; whereto she had also borne witness by being a confessor under some of the latter persecutions. This she took all imaginable care to convey and propagate to her grandchildren, planting their minds with the first seeds and principles of truth, as St. Basil more than once gratefully owns in his epistles. Five years being spent in this domestic education,^c and being accurately accomplished with all the preliminary parts of learning, he betook himself to travel, to improve and complete his studies. Whether he went first to Antioch, (which we know he did afterwards,) and studied for some time under the great Libanius, the most celebrated sophist and eloquent orator of that age, though not absolutely certain, is yet highly probable. For Libanius himself tells us,^d that he was acquainted with him, when but a youth, and honoured him for the extraordinary sobriety and gravity of his manners, and the mighty advances that he made in learning; which he mentions as antecedent to his going to Athens. Hence then he went to Cæsarea,^e the metropolis of Palestine, famous at that time for schools of learning, where he soon outwent his fellow-pupils, and bade fair to overtake his masters; so that he quickly drew the eyes of all persons upon him, who revered him for his excellent learning, but especially for his more excellent life; and generally beheld him as a master-orator, and dictator in philosophy, and, what is more, as a bishop in the church, before his years rendered him capable of those employments. But above all, he applied himself to study the true philosophy, to break loose from the charms of this lower world, and to trade in divine and heavenly things, and to barter away those things that are frail and perishing for those that are unchangeable and eternal. From Cæsarea he removed to Constantinople, lately made the imperial city, and flourishing with eminent professors of rhetoric and philosophy; whose several perfections, by the quickness and comprehensiveness of his parts, he digested into his own use and ornament; and then to crown all, went to Athens, the common seat of arts and learning, where to have spent some time was

^c Amphiloc. vit. Bas. c. 1.

^d Ep. ad Basil. inter Epp. Bas. cccxxxvi. s. 1.

^e Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 323, etc.

itself enough in those days to have given a man the reputation of a scholar.

III. The fame of so excellent a person had beforehand prepared men's minds, and made that university big with expectations of his coming, and every one was contriving how to gain him for their pupil. It was the custom at Athens, for the youth of the university to lie in wait for the arrival of young students, to beset all ways and tracts, all ports and passages, that so first seizing upon them, they might either persuade or draw them in to be their fellow-pupils, thinking by this means to oblige their masters, and outvie the train of other professors, between whom there used to be great clashing and emulation. Having gained the freshman, their first care was to lodge him in the house of some friend, or countryman, or at least of one of those setters that plied up and down in the behalf of that sophist who was to be his tutor. Next they gave way to any that would, to pose him with hard questions, and to run him down with quirks and subtleties, which were either more rude or ingenuous, according to the humour and education of him that put them. This they did, to baffle the good conceit of himself, which the young man was supposed to bring along with him; and from the very first to subdue him into a perfect submission to his teachers. This being done, they conduct him in a pompous procession through the market-place to the public bath, two and two going before him at equal distances; being come near the place, on a sudden they raised a wild frantic noise, and fetched many strange frisks and capers, knocking like madmen at the gates, till having sufficiently frightened the young man, the doors were opened, and he was made free; and then they returned and embraced him as their friend and fellow-pupil, and a member of the university. These troublesome ceremonies of initiation,^f however otherwise common and ordinary, were yet dispensed with towards St. Basil, out of the great reverence they had for him, as a person advanced beyond the laws of ordinary students. At Athens he met with Gregory of Nazianzum, (who had sometime been his school-fellow,) between whom there commenced so intimate and dear a friendship, (there being between them a peculiar affinity in temper,

^f Confer quæ de hisce ritibus habet Olympiod. ap. Phot. Cod. LXXX. et Liban. de vit. sua p. 7, et 9.

study, and course of life,) that nothing but their last breath could part them; they had the same disposition, inclination, design, and emulation, and, as Nazianzen adds,^g they seemed to have had but one soul between them. One of the first instances of freedom and familiarity, Nazianzen gave him upon this occasion. Some Armenian students, (a close and subtle people, according to the genius of that nation,) who had been his old acquaintance and school-fellows, being vexed to be outdone by a novice, one who had but just got on the philosophic *pallium*, came to him under pretence of friendship, and falling upon him with captious and sophistical disputations, endeavoured at the first attempt to beat him down. But they soon found they were over-matched; whereupon Nazianzen, to support the honour of the university, struck in with them, and relieved their languishing side. But perceiving that it was not love to truth, but envy and emulation that inspired them, he presently deserted them, and went over to St. Basil, and soon turned the scale. For Basil, now freed from so able an antagonist, fell so heavily upon them with his arguments, that not able to abide the shock, they were forced to retire with shame, and to leave him the full and absolute possession of the field.

IV. For the direction of his studies, he chiefly applied himself to Himerius and Proæresius,^h two of the most eminent sophists at that time at Athens; men renowned for learning and eloquence, and upon that account highly in favour with the emperor Julian; the latter whereof was an Armenian born,ⁱ and for that reason had the youth of Pontus, Cappadocia, Bithynia, and the neighbour-countries, committed to his care and tutorage. He was greatly honoured by the emperor Constans,^k who sent for him into France, and set him amongst the nobility at his own table; and in a bravery sent him to Rome, where he was honoured with a statue of brass in full proportion, with this inscription, ROME THE QUEEN OF CITIES TO THE KING OF ELOQUENCE. Under these masters he very happily improved his time, though he soon grew weary of the place,^l which did not answer his expectations, and was therefore wont to call Athens, *κενήν μακαρίαν*, “an empty and vain felicity.” And indeed he had im-

^g Orat. xx. p. 330.

^h Socrat. l. iv. c. 26. Sozom. l. vi. c. 17.

ⁱ Eunap. in vit. Proæres. p. 109.

^k Ibid. p. 121, etc.

^l Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 329.

mediately turned his back upon it, had he not been detained by the arguments and persuasions of his dear friend Nazianzen; for these two lived, ate, and conversed together, mutually grew up in all the endearments of kindness and friendship, and equally prospered in learning and piety. With none would they keep company but the meek and humble, the chaste and sober, whose conversation was likely to make them better. Those parts of learning they mainly insisted on, not which were most pleasant, but most useful, and which were aptest to minister to virtue and a good life. As for feasts, and shows, and public solemnities, they wholly neglected them, reckoning it honour enough to be, and to be accounted Christians; and though Athens was a dangerous place, being the great seat of impiety and idolatry, yet so far were they from being tempted, that they found themselves rather confirmed in the truth of their religion, by what they daily saw and heard. In short, the course they took, and the improvements they made, caused them to be universally taken notice of, so that they became the talk both of city and country, their fame spread itself all over Greece and foreign parts; wherever their tutors were known, they were mentioned, the glory of the scholars keeping pace with the name and reputation of their masters.

V. Basil had now furnished himself with all the advantages which Athens could afford, the ship was freighted with learning (to use his friend's expression^m) as far as human nature could contain; and having thus got his lading, it was time to think of returning home. Much ado he had to break loose from the passionate entreaties and persuasions of his friends, who vehemently urged and importuned his stay: but nothing went nearer to him, than the leaving his great friend behind him; the parting, though but for a time, seemed like the pulling of soul and body asunder. In his return, passing by Constantinople, as a place beset with snares and temptations, he went straight for Asia, and so to Antioch; and this, I doubt not, he means by the metropolis of Asia, whither, he tells us,ⁿ he hastened after his return from Athens, for the sake of those excellent things that were to be acquired there; and the church-historians put it past all peradventure.^o Here he put the last hand to his more polite and philosophical

^m Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 333.

ⁿ Epist. i. ad Eust. phil. s. 1.

^o Socrat. l. iv. c. 26. Sozom. l. vi. c. 17.

studies under the conduct of Libanius, who henceforward entertained him as an intimate friend, and beheld him with a most profound veneration. And now he began to practise the oratory, which he had hitherto learned, and for some time served the *forum*,^p and pleaded causes, wherein he discharged himself with great applause. But he soon grew weary of this course, the Divine Providence having designed him for higher and nobler purposes. Laying aside therefore the profession of rhetoric, he betook himself to the study of the holy scriptures,^q and the expositions of the ancients, especially the comments of Origen; by reading whereof, he became afterwards so able to encounter and refute the Arians, and shewed how little they (who so much pretended him to be on their side) understood either him or his opinions. In this study he and Nazianzen spent no small time and pains, running through that great man's comments upon the scripture, and noting what might be of more than ordinary use. Part of these *excerpta* are still extant under the title of Philocalia, consisting of questions upon scripture, with solutions adapted out of Origen's comments, and put together by these two learned men; a copy whereof Nazianzen sent as an incomparable present to Theodore bishop of Tyana.^r But Basil had not yet sufficiently seen the world, he had further travels to undergo,^s before he could be fixed in any particular station. He was a great admirer of Eustathius,^t an eminent philosopher of that time, for whose sake he had chiefly left Athens; whom not finding in his own country, he went after him into Syria, where he understood that he was gone for Egypt. Thither he followed him, though he could not meet with him. However, at Alexandria, and in other parts of Egypt, he conversed familiarly with the monks and hermits, whose incomparably strict and divine course of life he greatly admired, and afterwards copied out in his own practice; and perhaps now it was that he contracted an acquaintance with the great Athanasius, who about this time was forced to conceal himself in his Egyptian solitudes. A full year he continued in these parts, if we may believe the counter-

^p Basil. Epist. cl. ad Amphil. s. 1. Vid. Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 334.

^q Socrat. l. iv. c. 26. Sozom. l. vi. c. 17.

^r Greg. Naz. Epist. lxxxvii. p. 843.

^s Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 334.

^t Vid. Basil. Epist. i. ad Eust. phil. s. 1. et Epist. cccxiii.

feit Amphilochius,^u who adds, that in his return he overtook the philosopher Eubulus, (perhaps he means Eustathius,) whose discourse and conversation he relates at large; their coming to Antioch, and entertainment by Libanius; their going to Jerusalem, and his being baptized by Maximus, the bishop, in the river Jordan; with innumerable other relations, which being never hinted by Basil himself, nor justified by any concurrent suffrage, and many of them in themselves trifling and improbable, I shall not here trouble the reader with them. This only is certain, that he spent some considerable time both in Egypt, Palestine, Cælosyria, and Mesopotamia, amongst the devout and pious ascetics of those countries, and having accomplished his travels, came back and settled at Cæsarea.

VI. Julian was now advanced to the empire, a prince learned himself, and the great patron of learning in that age. He had been acquainted with St. Basil, when fellow-students at Athens, and notwithstanding the difference in religion (for Julian had now openly declared for paganism) he wrote a letter to him,^w wherein with great kindness and civility he invited him to court, assuring him of an hearty and unfeigned reception, and a liberty of discourse; that for his conveyance, he might make use of the public carriages; and having stayed his own time, should have liberty to return at pleasure. But notwithstanding so obliging an invitation, Basil refused to come to him; his apostacy from Christianity stuck in the good man's mind, and he talked some things, it seems, to the emperor's disadvantage; whereupon, after a vain ostentation of the mildness and gentleness of his temper, and the grandeur and magnificence of his empire, Julian, by a second letter,^x lets him know how much he resented his impudence, and the ill character he had given of him, commanding him to send him a thousand pounds of gold (every pound amounting to no less than thirty-six pounds of our money) towards the Persian expedition which he had then in hand, if ever he hoped to enjoy his favour: a prodigious sum, and which nothing can make it reasonable to believe he really intended; though at that time he generally laid vast taxes upon the Christians, to furnish him out

^u Amphiloc. vit. Bas. c. 1.

^w Ext. ap. Jul. Epist. xii. p. 127. et inter Basil. Epist. xxxix.

^x Ext. ap. Basil. Epist. xl.

for that war. Basil, nothing dismayed, returned an answer quick and pungent:^y that for the generous acts he so much talked of, they were inconsiderable, and levelled not so much against the Christians, as himself; that by his late carriage he had exposed himself to the just censures of wise men; and being seduced by wicked and malignant demons, had exalted himself against God and his church, and was fallen from all those early hopes which his first excellent essays, when they jointly studied the holy scriptures at Athens, had once given of him; that for the sum demanded, he had taken wrong measures, in requiring so much of a poor scholar, who had not provisions moderately sufficient for one day, whose house was a stranger to the arts of cookery, and to knives stained with blood; a few coleworts with crusts of bread, and a little sour vapid wine, being the costliest provisions served up at his table. What other letters passed between these two great men, is uncertain; it is not improbable, but that they debated matters of the Christian faith, whereof Julian gave this short magisterial censure:^z *Ἀνέγνων, ἔγνων, κατέγνων*, “what you have written, I have read, considered, and condemned;” whereto St. Basil returned this acute and elegant repartee, *ἀνέγνωσ, οὐκ ἔγνωσ εἰ, γὰρ ἔγνωσ, οὐκ ἂν κατέγνωσ*, “you have read, but not understood; for had you understood, you would not have condemned it.” There is indeed the fragment of an epistle to Julian, extant in the Acts of the second Nicene council,^a wherein he gives the emperor a brief account of his faith, and therein a most express acknowledgment of the invocation of saints, and the worship of images. But both phrase and matter so contrary to St. Basil’s genuine style and doctrine, as sufficiently proclaim it to be counterfeit; a passage not once mentioned by any Greek writers of that or the following ages, not by those who were most zealous to assert those doctrines, and took most pains to canvass the writings of the ancient fathers to defend them; nor was it ever heard of in the world, till mentioned by pope Adrian (the great patron of image-worship) in a letter to the Greek emperor, brought by his legates to that synod: which alone were enough to cast a damp upon it, seeing Adrian is not wont to stick at any thing, even the most spurious and apocryphal stories, (whereof he gives other

^y Epist. xli.^z Ap. Basil. Epp. xl. xli. Vid. Niceph. Hist. Eccl. l. x. c. 25.^a Act. ii. et iv. et exinde inter Basil. Epp. ccclx.

instances in that very letter,) that might support and shore up his cause. Hence the passage is generally waived by the more wise and judicious persons of the Roman church; and Baronius himself,^b though he gravely produces the passage, makes no advantage of it: an opportunity which he is seldom wont to let slip, when he can with any tolerable face lay hold upon it.

VII. I cannot take my leave of Julian, till I have observed what mischief he did at Cæsarea, where St. Basil now abode. It was a great and populous city,^c and inhabited by vast numbers of Christians; who being zealous of the honour of their religion, had heretofore pulled down the two famous temples of Jupiter and Apollo, and had very lately destroyed (what alone remained) the temple dedicated to the public genius of the city. This put Julian out of all patience, to see pagan temples openly pulled down, at the same time that he was earnestly labouring to set them up. He was angry with the Gentiles of Cæsarea, that, though few in number, they had not rushed in as one man to defend the temple, and ventured lives and fortunes in that cause and quarrel. Indeed, some mischief was done the Christians,^d several of them being slain in the hubbub, and more had been so, had not the governor carried it with an equal hand, sometimes conveying the Christians out of danger, sometimes punishing some of the over-forward Gentiles; for which prudent care and moderation he was accused to the emperor, and had died for it, but that at last Julian was pleased to change the sentence into banishment. The governor pleaded, that he had proceeded according to law; that the number of the Gentiles was inconsiderable, and that it would have been a barbarous cruelty, violently to have fallen in upon so great a multitude; the emperor replied, what great matter, if one Gentile hand had despatched half a score Galileans? Next he proceeded to call the city to account, whose charter he took away, reducing it into the rank of a village, disnominating it, and not suffering it to bear the name of Cæsar; a title which it had had ever since the time of Claudius, being originally called Maza, from Mosoch, prince of that country, afterwards Mazaca. He seized upon the treasures and revenues of the churches, both within the city and without, forcing them by racks and torments to discover them;

^b Ad Ann. 362.

^c Sozom. l. v. c. 4.

^d Greg. Naz. Orat. i. in Julian. p. 91.

and commanding the sum of three hundred pounds of gold, (that is, in our account, ten thousand and eight hundred pounds,) to be immediately paid into the exchequer. The clergy he made to be entered upon the muster-roll, to serve as soldiers under the governor of the province, the most troublesome and dishonourable part of the Roman militia; the common people, with their wives and children, he put under tribute, and left them in the same capacity with those in the country villages; swearing, after all, that unless the temples were forthwith rebuilt, he would utterly destroy the place, and not suffer a Galilean to wear an head upon his shoulders: and perhaps had been as good as his word, had not death happily taken him off. To be sure, St. Basil had gone to stake, Nazianzen expressly telling us,^e that they two had the honour of the Cyclops, to be reserved last to punishment, that, at his return from Persia, they might have fallen as a triumphant and magnificent victim to his deities. But the Divine Providence mercifully prevented that, Julian himself being shortly after taken off by a violent death. I know not whether it be worth relating, what the author of the Alexandrine Chronicon reports,^f that the same night that Julian was slain, Basil had a vision, wherein he saw the heavens opened, and our blessed Saviour sitting upon a throne, and calling aloud to St. Mercurius, to go and kill Julian, the emperor, the great enemy of Christians. The saint having received his commission, and being armed with a coat of mail, immediately departed. Soon after returning, he gave our Lord an account, that according to his command Julian was slain. Basil, frightened with the noise, awakened in some consternation, and going down to church to morning prayers, called his clergy together, whom he acquainted with his vision, and that Julian was killed that night. They all besought him to conceal it, the reporting it being a matter of dangerous consequence. But my author spoils the whole story, by laying the scene of it while Basil was bishop of Cæsarea, which he was not at this time, nor for seven years after Julian's death.

^e Orat. iv. p. 132.

^f Ad Ann. Julian. ii.

SECTION II.

HIS ACTS FROM HIS ENTRANCE INTO ORDERS TILL HIS RETURN
FROM HIS PONTIC SOLITUDES.

Basil's first entrance into ecclesiastic orders. Eusebius ordained bishop of Cæsarea; great trouble and dissension about that matter. Basil quarrelled with by Eusebius, but defended by the monks of Cæsarea. His retirement to Neocæsarea; and thence into the wilderness. The delightful situation of the place of his abode. Nazianzen and others repair to him. The manner of their monastic life, and strict devotion. Rules of monastic discipline composed by Basil. His apologetic to the people of Cæsarea for his retirement, and to vindicate himself from the malicious reflections cast upon him, and to establish them in the catholic faith. His erecting devout societies both of men and women. His advice taken about things to be transacted in the synod at Lampsacus. The notorious juggling of Eustathius, and others of the Semiarian and Macedonian parties. A reconciliation endeavoured between Eusebius and Basil. His return importunately desired, and why. An agreement effected by Nazianzen's mediation.

ST. BASIL, in the mean time, followed close his studies, and entered into the service of the church by due and regular approaches. For having for some time been reader in the church of Cæsarea,^g he was next made deacon by Meletius bishop of Antioch,^h and afterwards advanced to the order of priesthood by his own diocesan. It must not be forgotten, that while he was yet deacon,ⁱ he was present at the synod of Constantinople, holden in the end of the year 359, where he assisted Basil bishop of Ancyra, the head of the Homoiousian party, against the Anomæans or Heterousian sect; and though superior to most in the arts of speaking, yet, by reason of a natural bashfulness and diffidence, he declined public disputations. After this he returned home, and lived at Cæsarea, chiefly conversing with those devout mortified men who had formed themselves to a strict and monastic course of life. It happened that the see of Cæsarea fell void,^k and great expectations were on foot about the choice of a new archbishop, the splendour and greatness of that see meeting with the warm temper and ungovernable zeal of that people, had put the city into an extraordinary commotion about this matter. Wearied, at length, with mutual dissensions, they

^g Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 336.

^h Socrat. l. iv. c. 26.

ⁱ Philost. l. iv. c. 12.

^k Greg. Naz. Orat. xix. in fun. patr. p. 308, etc.

unanimously pitched upon one Eusebius, a gentleman of chief note and authority in the city, a man of a most pious life, but a layman, and as yet unbaptized. Him they lay hold of, and, though protesting against it, by the help of the guards, bring him to the church, where some neighbour-bishops were met in order to the election, desiring (yea, and threatening too, if they were refused) that he may be forthwith baptized, and ordained their bishop. The good fathers saw there was no other way to allay the storm, but to comply with the importunity of the people; who thereupon, having first baptized him, consecrated, and placed him upon the episcopal throne. But no sooner were they at liberty, but they began to disown what they had done, and resolved to rescind the election, pretending it to be uncanonical, and extorted by force and violence; only Gregory, Nazianzen's father, bishop of Nazianzum, a little town in that province, stood to it, and by all means laboured to ratify and confirm it. It made the case a great deal worse, that Julian lay at this time at Cæsarea, whither he was come to see execution done upon that city, for the riot made upon the pagan temple; and it vexed him not a little, to see a Christian archbishop thus zealously and tumultuously chosen under his very nose, and a man, too, whom he did not like. The governor of the province, who likewise owed Eusebius an old grudge, for having taken a different course, while employed in the administration of civil affairs, took advantage of the emperor's resentment, and wrote letters in his name to the several bishops, commanding them with menaces to repair thither, and manage the charge against Eusebius. Amongst the rest, a letter came to Gregory, the aged bishop of Nazianzum, who returned this short and bold answer: That in these matters they were subject to an higher prince, whose cause was now opposed, who would examine the election, which they had duly and regularly made; that in other things force and violence might be offered them, but that no man could hinder them from maintaining what they had legally and justly done; unless, after all the rest, they could make a law, that men should not take care of their own affairs. The governor, though offended with the freedom of the answer, yet admired the wisdom and spirit of the man; and it so far prevailed, that the emperor's displeasure cooled, and no farther attempts were made in that matter.

II. But though the storm seemed allayed from abroad, yet did it not clear up into fair weather at home. Eusebius, the new-elected bishop, took some occasion to fall out with Basil,¹ and though otherwise a very good man, yet in this fell short of the ordinary rules both of prudence and religion. He was himself obnoxious upon the account of his late election, not strictly warrantable according to the standing laws and canons of the church; he had to deal with a person of a great name, and an unquestionable reputation, and who by his authority and influence was able to steer a party which way he pleased; besides, there were some Western bishops (probably Lucifer of Calaris, and Eusebius of Vercellæ) at this time at Cæsarea, who took in with those that were most zealous for the catholic interest. Nor did Basil stand alone in this matter; the monks of Cæsarea, over whom he presided as their director and governor, presently espoused their master's quarrel, and finding Eusebius unreasonable in his exceptions, and obstinate in his resolutions, withdrew from all communion with him, and drew a great part, not only of the common people, but of the magistrates, into the separation. Things ripening thus fast into an open breach, Basil, who was at a loss how to behave himself in this disjuncture of affairs, out of a great regard to the peace of the church, thought it best, at least for the present, to retire into the wilderness, wherein he was not a little swayed by his own inclination, to embrace the solitudes of a private life, where he doubted not to find those happy opportunities for virtue and divine converses,^m and those real advantages for conquering the world, and subduing the power of vicious and inordinate appetites, which a noise and a crowd were never likely to afford.

III. The first place he went to was Neocæsarea,ⁿ the chief city of Pontus, which had been the place of his education, where he had much acquaintance, and enjoyed the converse of excellent men; and finding it a place fit for a contemplative life, (being situate in the more wild and desert parts of the country,) stayed here a long time. But wearied at length with the troublesome interruptions of society, he withdrew into the adjacent wilderness, where he fixed his station in the mountainous parts,^o near

¹ Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 336.

^m Vid. Bas. Ep. ccxxiii. s. 2.

ⁿ Vid. Ep. cex. s. 2.

^o Ibid. Ep. xiv. s. 2. Vid. Ep. ccxxiii. s. 5. et Nyss. de vit. Macrin. p. 182.

the bank of the river Iris, a famous river, which arising in the mountains of Armenia, runs through the middle of Pontus, and empties itself into the Euxine sea. The place he made choice of, was naturally fitted for all the advantages of solitude and contemplation; it was a high mountain, clothed with a thick shady wood, and watered on the north with cool and crystal springs that issued from it. At the foot of the hill was a fruitful valley, the verdure and fertility whereof, was not a little owing to those benign streams that flowed from the neighbouring hills; as for its quietness and security, it was beholden to the woods, variegated with all sorts of pleasant trees that encompassed it. Nature had formed it into a kind of peninsula, and fortified it with bulwarks on every side; two parts of it were secured by deep and unapproachable valleys; a third by the river, which, falling from a precipice, was a sure wall on that side; on the other was a ragged and naked rock, which, joining to the valley, cut off all avenues that way. There was but one passage to it, and that too secured by those who lived within. It was on the most prominent part of this mountain that St. Basil fixed his cell, whence there was an easy and delightful prospect both into the valley below, and upon the neighbour river, which, flowing with a quick rapid stream, and dashing itself against the rocks that opposed its passage, at once gratified both the eye and ear. Nor wanted there other divertisements to those who were desirous to entertain themselves with innocent pleasures. For as the river afforded plenty of excellent fish, and the adjoining hills conveniency for sport and game; so the birds from the woods charmed the ear with untaught music, while the eye was ravished to look down and behold the plains overspread with a natural tapestry of herbs and flowers. But the greatest advantage of the place, was its solitude, being perfectly remote from all company, not a man seen that way, unless when hunting by chance brought them thither, and that not in quest of beasts of prey, wolves, lions, &c. (for with such the place was not infested,) but of deer, wild goats, and such-like peaceable and harmless creatures.

IV. The good man was infinitely satisfied with the place of his retirement, and wanted nothing to complete his happiness but the company of his dear friend Nazianzen, whom he oft invited to come thither to him; in one of his letters he elegantly

describes his fortunate islands, (as Nazianzen calls them,^p) laying before him all the wild inartificial pleasures of the place, and the great advantages it ministered to piety and contemplation: which Nazianzen in his answer, with a great deal of witty eloquence, retorts upon him,^q turning all the passages of his letter into sport and merriment. But having after some time broken loose from those affairs that detained him, over he goes to him, and joyful, we may be sure, was the meeting of those two dear companions, whose inclinations, studies, and way of life ran both in the same channel. But though so mutually conversant with each other, yet they lived apart in different cells, as is plain from Nazianzen's epistle to Amphilochius,^r one of the pious inhabitants of that place. Indeed Basil's company and course of life quickly drew others into those parts; who, flying from the noise and troubles of the world, did after his example give up themselves to the severities and mortifications of a retired life. He had in his travels, with great complacency, observed the strictness practised by the monks and anchorets in Egypt and Palestine,^s whose rules and institutions he resolved to set on foot at his return. And meeting at Cæsarea with some ready disposed to a monastic life, he joined himself to them; till being forced thence, he now again revived the design, in a place much more opportune and convenient for it. Great numbers flocking thither, they soon grew up into religious societies, spending their time in singing psalms, in fervent prayers, devout meditations, reading and expounding the holy scriptures, and the constant exercises of piety and virtue.^t And what hours were borrowed from the offices of religion, were laid out in bodily labours, felling wood, or digging stones, in setting trees, planting and watering gardens, an employment which at once afforded both maintenance and recreation. And because no course of life can be managed without some fixed laws and constitutions, he advised with Nazianzen about drawing up particular orders to be observed in the monastic state, which they formed into rules and canons; and for the benefit of posterity, as well as the present age, committed and consigned to writing.^u Some such thing he had been hammering at his first coming into the wilderness, as

^p Epist. vii. p. 770.

^q Ibid.

^r Epist. xii. p. 776.

^s Vid. Bas. Ep. cccxiii. s. 2.

^t Vid. Naz. Ep. ix. p. 774.

^u Id. in Bas. Orat. xx. p. 358.

appears by his letter to Nazianzen upon that subject,^v wherein he acutely balances the advantages and disadvantages both of a civil and retired life, and gives many excellent directions necessary to be observed by those who embrace a solitary and ascetic life. These were the first rules of monastic discipline that were established in the Eastern church, and from hence were derived the several constitutions of all those religious orders that afterwards overran the church.

V. St. Basil had now leisure to look about him, and to remember his friends at Cæsarea. They had greatly resented his departure from them, and had earnestly written to him to return. But instead of that, he sends them an apologetical epistle,^w wherein he excuses his retirement, and begs their forbearance for a time, (this course of life being not only agreeable to his humour, but highly useful to the purposes both of piety and study,) and cautions them to beware of the insinuations of impostors, lest, like the shepherds of the Philistines, they privily stopped up their wells, and muddied the pure catholic doctrine professed amongst them. And because the doctrine of the holy Trinity was then mainly struck at, he spends the far greatest part of that apologetic in asserting the deity of the Son of God, but especially in proving the divinity of the Holy Ghost. But the good man, though desirous of nothing more than an undisturbed quiet life, found that even the solitudes of the wilderness could not afford it. He had shifted his scene, but had not changed his state: he had fled from Cæsarea to avoid noise and contention, and he now met with vexations and inquietudes nearer hand. Musonius bishop of Neocæsarea was lately dead, and the people were passionately desirous to have Basil for his successor. But the Sabellian faction in that city, knowing how much it imported their cause to exclude so zealous a defender of the catholic faith, strongly opposed the election; and that they might lessen his reputation with the people, loaded him what they could with odious imputations. They charged him with innovations in matters of religion, that he had set up monachism, and had introduced a new way of singing psalms into the church; that he was a proud and ambitious man, and had importunately attempted to intrude himself into the Neocæsarean see; that he had deserted the doctrine of their ancestors, and

^v Bas. Ep. xlii. s. 4, 5.

^w Ep. viii.

especially departed from the faith of the great St. Gregory, the first bishop and founder of their church, whose doctrine they pretended to be the same with theirs. News hereof coming to him, he immediately prepares for his defence, not to promote his interest, but to vindicate his credit. To which end he writes first to the presbytery, and then to the whole clergy of that church;^x wherein having modestly reprov'd them for their unkindness to him, their credulous assent to the slanders of those who by ill arts laboured to undermine his reputation, and having warned them of the corrupt dogmata and bad designs of the Sabellian teachers, he particularly answers the crimes objected to him. That for his forming men into a monastic life, wherein, having renounced the world and all its secular cares and interests, they might the more closely attend the duties of piety and devotion; he was so far from looking upon it as his fault, that he thought it to be his glory, and the great business of his life. Though he was not the first founder of it, the thing being practised in Egypt, Palestine, and elsewhere, by persons in comparison of whom he and his brethren were but children. Nor could he conceive how persons could be better employed, than by fasting and abstinence, to "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts," to get above the care and solicitude about clothes and diet, day and night to converse with heaven by prayers and praises, and to labour diligently with their own hands, that they might have to give to them that wanted. For the new way of psalmody which he was charged to have brought in, it was no other than what was now practised in most parts of the Christian church, the people rising before day, and going to church, where, having made their confessions and prayers to God, they proceeded to singing psalms; in which holy exercise the choir, being divided into two parts, mutually answered one another, the precentor beginning, and the rest following after; that thus employed, they held on till morning, when they jointly sung a psalm of confession unto God, and each one made profession of his repentance. And that if this was a fault, they must blame the pious and good men in Egypt, and Libya, and Thebais; in Palestine, Arabia, Phœnicia, Syria, and where not? That he should affect the episcopal throne, was, he tells them, a most false and groundless insinuation, wherein they might satisfy

^x Epp. ccvii. ccx.

themselves from his carriage many years ago, when the prime men of their city were sent to him, to invite him to an honourable office amongst them, and to which he wanted neither encouragement nor importunity, but had utterly refused it. And could they think he would now thrust himself upon them, who had heretofore so obstinately rejected their invitation? Lastly, as to his doctrine, it was sound and orthodox; and whereas the Sabellian party sheltered themselves under the pretended authority of St. Gregory, and made a great noise with a particular expression in his writings looking that way, he shews them that passage had not been considerably delivered by him as a point of doctrine, but had fallen from him in the heat of disputation, when warmly engaged in discourse with Ælianus the Gentile, the desire of gaining whom, made him less accurate and critical about words, not nicely contesting about lesser things, that he might reach the main conclusion: which occasioned his using many other phrases in that discourse, which however sincerely meant, were yet capable of being stretched by men of perverse minds to a bad sense; that the passage itself, rightly explained, was sound and warrantable; and that for the main of the cause, there was enough in that great man's works to clear the matter beyond all exception; and that Sabellianism had heretofore been silenced by the force of that doctrine that he had preached amongst them. Concluding his whole apology with a serious admonition, to beware of these men's insinuations, which however gilded over with fair pretences, did yet convey the most mortal poison.

VI. We may not suppose this excellent person merely cloistered up in his private cell, he had a more active and comprehensive piety, making frequent excursions into the province,^y preaching both in cities and villages, till by his warm and zealous discourses, he had thawed the dull and frozen temper of that people, and had kindled in them a brisk and generous sense of religion; so that societies were every where erected both of men and women, who gave up themselves to prayers, psalms, and the perpetual intercourses of devotion: hospitals founded for the poor, and endowed with competent provisions, so that the whole country seemed to put on a new face. He was employed in these and such-like exercises, when a synod being convened at

^y Rufin. l. ii. c. 9.

Lampsacus, a city standing upon the Hellespont, near the mouth of the Propontis, Eustathius bishop of Sebastia,² and some others going thither, came to Eusinoa, whither they sent for Basil, (for that they invited him to go with them to the synod, I see no necessity with Baronius to affirm,^a) where they discoursed him upon several arguments, and took his judgment in writing, as a person accurately versed in the controversies of that time. The synod was chiefly (if not entirely) managed by the Semiarian and by the Macedonian party,^b (however Sozomen by mistake says, they were Catholics,) who condemned the confession of the Arian synod of Ariminum, ratified by Eudoxius and his party in the convention at Constantinople, a little before the death of Constantius, and established that agreed upon in the council of Antioch, (wherein the consubstantiality of the Son was neither affirmed nor denied,) and which had been lately ratified in the synod at Seleucia. After two months' session they brake up, and gave the emperor an account of their synodal transactions, and ordered a legation to the bishops of the West, which was committed to Eustathius of Sebastia, Sylvanus of Tarsus, and Theophilus of Castabila, who, as soon as the wars then on foot would give leave, put themselves upon their journey. Coming to Rome they gave out themselves for perfect Catholics, and zealous defenders of the Nicene faith, and by that means procured letters of peace from pope Liberius, protesting in the libel they delivered to him,^c that they did heartily embrace and maintain the catholic faith, agreed upon in the holy synod of Nice, with the *τὸ ὁμοούσιον*, or word "consubstantial," piously added to it in opposition to the perverse doctrine of Arius; that they did, ever had, and ever would hold this faith; that as for Arius, and his impious opinions, they condemned both him and them, with all his adherents and followers, and whatever sects were contrary to the holy catholic faith of Nice, more particularly the confession that had been assented to in the council of Ariminum. To this they annexed a copy of the Nicene creed, which they subscribed both in their own name, and in the name of the persons by whom they were sent, professing they did it freely, and of their own accord. From Rome they went for Sicily, where a synod being assembled,

² Bas. Ep. ccxxiii. s. 5.

^b Socrat. l. iv. c. 4. 12. Sozom. l. vi. c. 7. 9.

^a Ad Ann. 365.

^c Ext. ap. Socrat. l. iv. c. 12.

by the same arts of dissimulation they gained their consent and communicatory letters. Hence in their return they passed through Illyricum, where, in a convention of bishops assembled on purpose, they procured also their letters, testifying their agreement and consent with them in the faith. Thus loaded with letters and synodal determinations, they came back into the East, and at Tyana, a city in Cappadocia, situate at the foot of mount Taurus, found the bishops of that country (amongst whom were Eusebius of Cæsarea, and Gregory the aged bishop of Nazianzum) met in synod, to whom they delivered their testimonial letters, and professed their embracing the Nicene faith: which was received and published with universal applause and approbation, and Eustathius thereupon restored to his see.

VII. To this synod it was (as Baronius will have it) that Basil wrote, acquainting them with his peaceable desires and inclinations, and that thereupon they mediated a peace between him and Eusebius, a chief member, and in all likelihood (it being in his province) president of the synod. The epistle is still extant, with this inscription,^d *TH BOYAH TYANON*, to the senate or council of Tyana, wherein he does indeed, in general terms, express a passionate desire of peace; but that this should be written to the synod assembled there, and that upon this particular occasion, neither the title nor body of the epistle do necessarily enforce us to believe. But however this be, it is certain that about this time great endeavours were used to heal the breach, and to recover this good man back into his country. The people of Cæsarea were infinitely desirous of his return, and the necessities of the church did loudly call for it. For the Arian faction, encouraged by the favour of the emperor Valens, carried all before them, and, taking the advantage of his absence, had been very busy in their attempts upon Cæsarea. Eusebius the bishop was a good man, but, having been immediately advanced from the civil tribunal to the episcopal throne, was but little versed in theological studies, especially the nice controversies of that age. The Arians were not to be told what use to make of this, it being that which mainly gave encouragement to the bold and brisk endeavours of that subtle sect; which had not so successfully spread its plumes, had Basil been at home to encounter them, whom all knew to be a no less resolute than dexterous champion

^d Epist. xvii.

of the catholic cause. This made his return importunately desired on all hands; though the mainspring of the motion was his dear companion Nazianzen, who had some time since been forced to quit the Pontic solitudes, to relieve the infirmities of his aged father. He dealt effectually with Eusebius about this matter,^e whom he treated with that plain and downright freedom, that the man was angry, and resented it as an affront, for which the other apologizes with a submissive, but yet becoming liberty, abating nothing of his earnest intercession. He thanked him for the respect and honour he was pleased to put upon himself; but withal told him, he could not well bear the injury he had done his dear friend Basil, the intimate partner of his life and studies, whom he loved and regarded above all other men; that therefore to honour him, and disrespect his friend, was to stroke a man's head with one hand, and to strike him with the other; or to trim and beautify the walls of the house, while a man is digging up the foundations; that it was his request, which he earnestly besought him to comply with, to afford Basil a better place in his esteem and favour, engaging for him on his behalf, as a most reasonable return, a correspondent reverence and regard. The mediation it seems took effect; Eusebius remitting his stiffness and obstinacy, and shewing himself forward to an amicable reconciliation; which, he assured him, he would by letter intimate to Basil, and peaceably invite him to return. An account whereof Nazianzen immediately transmitted to Basil,^f and withal advised him to prevent the bishop's kindness, either by his presence or letter, or rather to write first, and then follow himself, that so he might seem rather to conquer than be overcome: that the state of the church at that time did no less bespeak him to hasten his return; heresy was broken in upon them, confusion had overrun every place; and the storm, it was feared, likely to grow worse, and truth in danger to be rooted up, unless some such able champion were forthwith sent in to their relief and succour; that if he desired it, he himself was ready to come to him to settle his affairs, and conduct him home. Accordingly he went,^g and found it no hard matter to persuade him to return, the miserable condition of the church having made a

^e Greg. Naz. Ep. xx. p. 783. vid. Ep. clxix. p. 877. et clxx. p. 878.

^f Id. Ep. xix. p. 782.

^g Vid. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 338, 339. et Niceph. c. 18.

very deep impression upon his mind; he saw it was now high time to lay aside private grudges, and to look to the common tranquillity and safety.

SECTION III.

HIS ACTS FROM HIS RETURN TILL HIS BEING MADE BISHOP OF CÆSAREA.

His activity after his returning, in reforming abuses, and diligent assisting the bishop in the government of the church. His incomparable charity in a time of public famine. His care of men's souls as well as bodies. His constancy against the attempts of the Arian governor. The death of Eusebius. Basil's flight to avoid the bishopric. His election to it, promoted by the effectual instance and recommendations of Nazianzen and his aged father. The time of his ordination to that see. His advancement congratulated by Nazianzen.

The first thing he did after his return, was to set himself to redress the evil state of things at Cæsarea: where differences had arisen, he endeavoured to compose them; where breaches had been made, he repaired them; his daily study and preparation was, how to attack the enemy, whom he so successfully assaulted at every turn, that he soon drove them quite out of the field: assisted in these conflicts by his old companion, who was to him as Barnabas to Paul, (as he modestly speaks of himself,) a coadjutor in this great work, wherein he thought it honour enough to be a second to so great a champion. And that the world might see that he was perfectly reconciled, and retained no resentment upon account of the harsh usage he had met with, he carried himself towards his bishop with a most profound observance, whose late unkindnesses he extenuated, and represented them only as a device and artifice of the devil, who envied the happiness of their concord; notwithstanding which, he shewed how well he understood, how readily he could comply with the laws and canons of the church. He was at hand in all instances of canonical obedience; he was to the bishop an impartial monitor, a faithful counsellor, a diligent coadjutor, (especially in preaching,) a dexterous manager of business; he was, in short, the staff of his age, the support of his faith, the guide of his family, and the agent of his affairs abroad; so that though he was below the chair, yet the reins of ecclesiastical government were lodged

in his hands. Eusebius governed the people, and Basil Eusebius, who was content to shine by that lustre which the other's wise and prudent administration of affairs did reflect upon him. Where the cause of the church, or of common equity was concerned, he scrupled not freely to address himself to the chiefest magistrates in the city; took up differences amongst neighbours with so much impartiality, that his decisions took effect, as if they had been ratified by law. He was a common advocate for the poor, whose right he defended, and whose wants he relieved both of soul and body; by his means provision was made for their maintenance, hospitals erected for the entertainment of strangers, directions given for the education of devout pious virgins; sometimes he was taken up in forming rules for those who engaged in a monastic life, and these delivered both by word and writing; otherwhiles in composing forms of public prayer, and in reducing the several parts and places of divine worship into decency and order.

II. He was thus employed, when an opportunity of expressing the most generous piety and charity presented itself. Several calamities had of late afflicted the Eastern parts: anno 367, fell great storms of hail,^h of that unusual bigness, that they were like stones; which, beside other mischief, destroyed the lives of many: a judgment, some thought, sent by heaven for the emperor's banishing so many pious bishops, who had refused to communicate with Eudoxius and his crew. The next year happened vast inundations and terrible earthquakes, and these followed by a dreadful famine, which as it spread in other parts, so raged principally in Cappadocia. At Caesareaⁱ was the greatest dearth that had been known in the memory of man, and being an inland city, was not capable of those foreign supplies which maritime towns are furnished with. It added to the public calamity, that what stores there were, the corn-merchants kept up, and in despite of the severest threatenings of God, and the common principles of humanity, would not part with, but at excessive rates. In this evil case Basil bestirred himself: he plied the rich with unwearied arguments and persuasives, till he had first opened their hearts, and then their

^h Socrat. l. iv. c. 11. Hieron. in Chr. Ann. 368. Idat. Fast. Cons. Ann. 368. vid. Greg. Naz. in plag. grand. Orat. xv.

ⁱ Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 340.

purses; and having made himself master of their treasures, he freely dealt his bread to the hungry: the poor, and those who were even starved to death, persons of all ranks, ages, and sexes, he gathered into one place, distributing victuals to them according to their several necessities, which he, and others by his example, prepared and administered with his own hand, not disdaining the meanest office whereby he might become useful to them. Nor was he wanting in instances of the most real and perfect charity, and to which he was conducted by the more immediate obligations of his office. For at the same time that he provided for the bodies of the poor, he took care especially to feed their souls, which he nourished with "the bread of angels," those divine and heavenly counsels, which he liberally poured out upon them. The ignorant he instructed in their duty, the slothful he quickened to a life of piety and virtue; and his discourses made the deeper impression, by being pressed home with so charitable a hand. About the same time he was called off to a more difficult service, to give trial of his constancy to the truth. For Valens the emperor,^j puffed up with his late success against the Goths, resolved now by force to carry on the Arian cause: in order whereunto he made an expedition into Propontis, Galatia, Bithynia, and the neighbour-provinces, making havoc of the churches wherever he came, and was now come into Cappadocia. Modestus the prefect came to Cæsarea before him, where the first thing he did, was to set upon Basil, whom by all ways he sought to bring over to the party. He promised him, upon his compliance, the emperor's favour, and that he should be promoted to the episcopal see, (by which it is plain this was done while he was yet presbyter of that church,) but if he continued obstinate, he must expect the utmost effects that a powerful displeasure could bring upon him: against all which the good man stood immoveable; so that, perceiving no good could be done upon him, the emperor for that time departed, reserving him to a sharper trial afterwards.

III. Eusebius had now sat bishop somewhat more than eight years, when he was translated to a better life, expiring his last breath in Basil's arms,^k who stood by him and assisted him in his last hours. The see thus vacant, Basil was well aware that

^j Greg. Nyss. l. i. contr. Eunom. p. 48, 49. Vid. Sozom. l. vi. c. 16.

^k Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 342.

attempts would be made to place him in the archiepiscopal chair. To prevent which, he withdrew himself, probably under pretence of indisposition: but because he foresaw what advantage the Arian party would make, both of the vacancy and his absence, and that the clergy of that church had written to him, not to desert them in so dangerous a time, he despatched away Eustathius the deacon with a letter to Nazianzen,^l entreating him to concern himself in this matter, and to lend his best assistance in the speedy election of a fit pastor for that church; that he had already an excellent person in his eye, whom if they could obtain, he made no doubt but it would prove an acceptable and happy choice. At the first news of his being sick, (for he had sent him word,^m that he passionately desired to see and speak with him, and that he must make haste, if ever he intended to see him alive,) Nazianzen was extremely afflicted, and prepared immediately to go to him. But when he understood that all this was little more than a device to draw him to Cæsarea, and that indeed the business was the choice of a new bishop, he stopped his journey, and turned back. However, he laid not aside the care of that place, but employed all his thoughts,ⁿ and improved all his interest, to fix and settle that affair; and because he knew there was none fitter than Basil, he recommended him, both by public and private letters, wherein he had the concurrent advice and suffrage of his father, a man of great esteem and reverence in those parts, in whose name he wrote to the people of Cæsarea,^o wherein he lets them know, that although he was bishop of but an inconsiderable see, yet his age and interest in the common peace and welfare of the church, made him equally concerned with any; that the fixing a bishop in any church was a matter of great weight, much more at Cæsarea, a place renowned for its dignity, antiquity, orthodoxy, and unity, in all which respects the eyes of the Christian world were from all parts drawn upon it, like lines directed from the circumference to the centre; that for his own part, though they had invited him to the consultation, yet he feared his age and infirmities would not permit him to be there; and if not, yet he thought himself obliged to supply by letters the want of his company. He doubted not but they would have plenty of

^l Epist. xlvii.

ⁿ Greg. vit. Naz. p. 14.

^m Greg. Naz. Ep. xxi. p. 784.

^o Inter Greg. Naz. Ep. xxii. p. 785.

excellent and worthy persons candidates for the place, but that he knew none of the whole number comparable to Basil the presbyter, a man of an exact life, and admirable learning and eloquence, and in both respects the almost only person capable to encounter the subtle and disputing heretics of that time: which he intimated to all, both of the clerical and monastical order, and to all the magistrates and senators of the city, yea, to the whole body of the people; that, if they agreed in this proposal, he was ready to give his suffrage, which he was assured was right and well grounded, and would account himself spiritually present at the election, and would be the first that should lay hold upon the person; but if otherwise they proceeded in this matter (as heretofore they had done) by cabals and parties, by popular and tumultuary elections, they might do what they pleased, he would reserve his suffrage to himself. After this he wrote to the same effect to the bishops that were met there about this matter,^p whom he gently chides for sending him only a loose and general invitation, without any intimation either of the time when, or the business they were to consult about, as if they designed on purpose to prevent his being there, lest he should oppose their designs; that for the thing itself, he knew there would be several persons proposed, according as their different interest, resolutions, or inclinations led them, but that he could not recommend any one like Basil, either for the exemplariness of his life, or the charms of his eloquence, or his incomparable attainments in all parts of virtue. If his weakness and infirmity of body were pleaded as a bar to hinder him, they should remember they were to choose a bishop, not an *athleta* or champion, (where a strong and robust constitution was necessary,) and that God was able enough to strengthen the infirm and weak. In this choice he would readily join with them, but if they proceeded with bye-ends, and managed the affair with parties and factions, it was their own doing, and he should rejoice to have no hand in it.

IV. Nor was the good old man content only to make the proposal, and thus freely and affectionately to declare his mind, but knowing of what importance his presence would be, he resolved to go;^q he was of a great age, and struggled with many insupportable infirmities and distempers; but summoning to-

^p Greg. Naz. Ep. xxiii.

^q Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 343.

gether the whole strength of nature for so good a work, he set forwards, being put into the chariot more like a corpse laid upon a bier (as his own son expresses it) than a man fit to undertake a journey; though God was pleased so far to reward his honest and industrious zeal, that his journey was so far from impairing the little remainders of his health, that he returned much more strong and vigorous than before. When he came to Cæsarea, he found, what he had all along foreseen, the election driven on with heats and animosities, and especially a great party made against Basil, the whole Arian tribe, with all their petty branches and subdivisions, strongly opposing his election; the opposition being chiefly managed by the governors and great men of the court-party, who had drawn no small number of the refuse part of the city to their side. But truth and honesty got the upper hand, and the choice fell upon Basil, whom the prelates solemnly consecrated to that see; which was done either anno 370, or the year following; though Baronius places it anno 369; and Dorotheus of Monembasia,^r anno 372, or the ninth year of Valentinian. No sooner was the hurry over, but his friend Nazianzen sent him a congratulatory letter,^s wherein he acquaints him how heartily he rejoiced with him for his eminent advancement in the church, especially at a time when it stood so much in need of such a wise prudent conduct; that he must not presently expect his coming over to him, lest it should diminish his reputation, and argue him guilty of rashness and vanity, in a too hasty gathering his friends and followers about him; that he would come as soon as the shadows of the envious and the malicious were vanished, which he reckoned would be no more able to bear up long, than the blind and the lame at Jerusalem were to keep David out of the city. But the opposition did not sink presently: the great men, vexed that they could not carry the day, gave him all the trouble they could in this new scene of affairs, nor wanted there those about him that sought to make their ends of him to their own advantage. This troubled the good man, whereupon Nazianzen backs his former with a second letter,^t to encourage him to go on in despite of envy and opposition, and that he did not fear that any thing would befall him, but what would become a philosopher to bear; that now was the time to shew himself, and to make known that philo-

^r Synops. Hist. p. σξη'.

^s Greg. Naz. Ep. xxiv. p. 787.

^t Ibid. Ep. xxv.

sophy which he had been studying all his life; how easily he could conquer the affronts and injuries of men, and how firmly he could maintain his ground like a rock in the middle of the sea: that if it were necessary, he would come over to him, and assist him with his counsel, if at least he wanted it; (as what need has the ocean of water?) but however to benefit himself in learning, patience, and how to bear contumelies and reproaches with him. Accordingly some time after he came,^u whom Basil received with all the endearments of an intimate friend, proffered him the first place in the presbytery, or the honour of an episcopal chair; which the other modestly declined, and that with mutual content and satisfaction.

SECTION IV.

HIS ACTS FROM HIS BEING MADE BISHOP TILL THE END OF HIS CONTEST WITH VALENS AND THE GOVERNOR AT CÆSAREA.

Valens's arrival at Cæsarea. Basil summoned before the Arian prefect. The dialogue that passed between them, discovering his inflexible adherence to the catholic religion. His great virtue reported to the emperor, who admires the piety of their public devotion. His discourse with him. His sharp rebuke of Demosthenes the emperor's cook. The Arians earnest for his banishment. Valens unable to sign the warrant. Embracing the catholic faith propounded by him, as the best expedient for the young prince's recovery; but rejected by the emperor: the child dies. Basil honoured by his enemies. His intercession for the Catholics at Nice, justified by a miracle. The sufferings of Eusebius Samosetanus in defence of the Nicene cause. His prohibiting the people to resist authority. His unfortunate death by the Arians. Basil's troubles at Cæsarea, for his protecting a widow that fled for sanctuary to the altar. His undaunted courage in that affair.

HE was as yet scarce warm in his chair, when the storm that had but lately blown over, returned with more fierceness and violence than before. Valens the emperor, in pursuance of his great design to subdue the East to the doctrine of Arius, came a second time to Cæsarea, attended as before with Modestus the prætorian prefect.^v Vexed they were, that he had so openly baffled their first attempt; and that since that he had been chosen bishop, in despite of all the intrigues they had laid, and the interest they could make against him. At their first arrival,

^u Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 344.^v Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 346, etc. 349, etc.

he is sent for before the prefect, and went more like one that was going to a feast, than a prisoner to the bar; the discourse between them, passed in this manner.

MODESTUS. What is the matter, Basil, (for he vouchsafed not to honour him with his episcopal title,) that you presume to oppose so great an emperor, and that you alone carry yourself with so much obstinacy above all the rest?

BASIL. What do you mean, sir; what arrogance do you speak of? For as yet I do not understand you.

MOD. I mean your refusing to comply with the emperor's religion, when all others have struck sail, and given up the day.

BAS. But that is inconsistent with the will and command of my sovereign emperor; nor can I be ever brought to worship a creature, when I myself am God's creature; or one that is a made god, when I myself am commanded to become a partaker of the divine nature.

MOD. And what then do you make of us?

BAS. Nothing at all, as long as you command such things as these.

MOD. But tell me, do not you think it a great honour to come over to us, and to have us on your side?

BAS. I grant you to be governors, and very illustrious persons; yet you are not greater and more honourable than God: it is no small honour to have you on our side, but yet in the same capacity with others, who are subjected to our care and charge. For Christianity is to be measured, not by dignity of persons, but soundness of the faith.

The prefect was nettled at this, and passion growing upon him, he started up out of his chair, and proceeded in a sharper strain.

MOD. What, then, are you not afraid of the power we are armed with?

BAS. What can happen? What can I suffer?

MOD. Any one of those many things that are within my power.

BAS. What are they, let us know? Confiscation of goods, banishment, tortures, or death? Or if there be any thing worse than these, threaten that; for of these there is none can reach us.

MOD. How so?

BAS. He is not obnoxious to confiscation, who has nothing to

lose: unless you want these old tattered clothes, and a few books, wherein consists my whole estate. Banishment I regard not, who am tied to no place; I account not this country, where I now dwell, my own; and I can think any mine, where I shall be cast: or, to speak more properly, the whole earth is God's, whose pilgrim and sojourner I am. As for tortures, what can they do, where there is not a body to bear them? Set aside the first blow, and there is nothing else within your power. And then for death, I shall esteem it a kindness and benefit; it will but sooner send me to God, for whose sake I live and act, and to whom I am in a great measure dead, having of a long time been hastening thither.

MOD. I have never yet met with a man so much unconcerned, and that has talked at this rate of freedom and liberty.

BAS. Perhaps you never yet met with a true bishop, otherwise, in like circumstances, he would have treated you in the same way that I have done. For, sir, in other things we are peculiarly submissive and humble, according to the law of our religion; far from proudly exalting ourselves, I say, not against supreme authority, but any of the meanest and most plebeian rank. But when the cause of God and religion is at stake, we overlook all things else, and fix our eyes only upon him. In such cases, fire and sword, wild beasts, and instruments to rake off the flesh by piece-meal, are a pleasure rather than a torment to us. You may therefore reproach and threaten us, do your pleasure, and use your power; let the emperor know you cannot conquer us, for you shall never prevail with us to confederate with that impious sect; no, though you should threaten worse things than you have done yet. And as for the advantage you propound to me,^w and the favour of the emperor, offer these things to boys and children, who are wont to be caught with such gaudy baits; the professors of true religion will not betray one syllable of divine truth, in defence whereof they are ready in any way to sacrifice and lay down their lives. I highly value the emperor's friendship, when I can have it with piety, and the favour of heaven, but without that, I look upon it as pernicious and deadly.

Modestus told him, surely he was mad. I wish (replied the other) I may be always thus mad. Then he was commanded to

^w Theodor. l. iv. c. 19.

be gone, and to advise with himself what he would do, and return his answer to-morrow; threatenings being added, unless he complied. The good man answered short, I will come again to-morrow, but the very same that I am to-day; and for your part, alter not your resolution, but execute what you have threatened.

II. The prefect now plainly saw, that the man's resolution was impregnable, and, though he appeared outwardly angry, could not at the same time but entertain a secret reverence and veneration for him. Whereupon having dismissed him, he went immediately to the emperor, and told him: Sir, we are conquered by this one bishop, whom no threatenings can shake, no arguments move, no promises allure. Some timorous or mean fellow may be wrought upon, but for this man, he must either be set upon by direct open force, or there can be no expectations of his yielding. Valens had so much generosity, as to admire virtue in an enemy; and though he was ashamed to desert his party, yet he commanded all rigorous proceedings against him to be stayed, and sought a fair occasion to insinuate himself into his good opinion, which he attempted in this manner. It was now the time of the Christmas solemnities, (the τὰ Ἐπιφάνια, as Nazianzen, or Θεοφάνια, as Nicephorus,) and the congregation was infinitely thronged; when the emperor, attended with a great retinue, entered into the church, where, beholding the frequency of the assembly, the order and decorum of the service, the majesty and gravity of the bishop, the reverence and devotion of the people, and taking notice of the fervency of their prayers, and the loud harmony and sprightliness of their singing psalmody, he was struck with horror, as with a clap of thunder, and his sight and senses began to fail him. And when the time of oblation was come, that according to custom he was to make his offering (which, say some,^x were vessels of silver) at the holy table, and perceived that nobody took it up, as not knowing whether Basil would receive it, he began to tremble, and his legs to falter, and he had undoubtedly fallen to the ground, if one of the clergy that stood next him had not caught hold of him and kept him up. After this, he again came into the church, and being admitted within the veil, into the *diaconicon*, or vestry, the good bishop discoursed to him at large concerning the faith, which the emperor heard with great atten-

^x Nicet. Comm. in Naz. Orat. xx.

tion; and which Nazianzen, who then stood by, professes he looked upon as things immediately spoke from heaven, and that he could not sufficiently admire the wisdom and divine philosophy of those discourses. At this intercourse, amongst others of the emperor's train, was present one Demosthenes, (whom the two Gregories, Nazianzen and Nyssen, elegantly call Nebuzaradan,) steward and chief cook of the imperial palace, who took upon him to interrupt Basil, and contradict him in rude barbarous language. Whereat smiling, he told the company, "We have now seen an ignorant and illiterate Demosthenes." The man thought himself affronted with the answer, and broke out into menaces and ill words; to whom the other replied, your business is to dress meats, and prepare sauces, but you cannot relish divine truths, your ears being stopped up with the noisome fumes and vapours of the kitchen. The emperor, however, was not displeased with the converse he had had, the edge of his fury being for the present abated, and he had a better opinion of Basil and his party than before.

III. The Arian prelates that were about the court perceived the emperor began to stagger, and therefore plied him with warm and importunate counsels, never giving over, till they had persuaded him to banish Basil. And so sure had they made themselves of it, that the very night was appointed, and at hand, for his transportation; the chariot in readiness, his friends prepared to accompany him, his enemies every where triumphing; nothing was wanting but the emperor's hand to the warrant, which being brought to him to sign, he was not able to write one syllable, the pen breaking under his hand: he tried a second, and then a third, and still had the same success; whereat he was amazed, his hand shook, and a consternation seized upon his mind, and catching up the paper, tore the warrant in pieces. The accident, we may well suppose, soon filled every corner with discourse, and indeed was a great instance of Heaven's immediate appearing in the good man's cause, which wanted not, at the same time, other testimonies from heaven for its vindication. Galates,^y the emperor's son, was seized with a malignant fever, which raged beyond all hopes of life. Valens was infinitely

^y Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 352. Theodor. l. iv. c. 19. Socrat. l. iv. c. 26. Sozom. l. vi. c. 16.

afflicted with the young prince's sickness, and in token of the deepest grief and passion, threw himself upon the ground. Physicians of the greatest note are sent for, whom the emperor entreated to improve the utmost of their skill for his son's recovery. But all in vain, the distemper was not to be removed by arts of physic. The empress Dominica was not only equally concerned with her husband, but had been troubled with frightful dreams, whereby she said she had been made to understand, that this calamity had befallen them for the injury that had been done the holy bishop. Hereupon it was concluded, that Basil should be sent for, and desired to improve his interest with heaven for the prince's health. But because the emperor was conscious to himself, how much he had affronted him by the late order for his banishment, he would not directly send for him in his own name, but committed it to some great men to manage. Upon the first intimation he came to court, where the emperor bespoke him in this manner: If the doctrine of the faith you profess be true, pray to God that my child may not die. Basil replied, If, sir, you will entertain the same faith that I do, and restore peace and unity to the church, doubt not but the prince shall recover. And, indeed, as soon as the bishop set his foot within the house, the distemper began somewhat to remit. But the emperor, it seems, liked not the terms, to whom Basil said no more but this, Then God's will be done concerning him, and went out. The issue was, the Arian bishops are called for, who prayed over, and baptized the child, and he immediately died. Warned by which example, Modestus, the prefect, (who was at that time taken with a desperate sickness,) sent for Basil, and with tears bewailed his carriage towards him; he told him, he was now sufficiently sensible of his error, beseeching him to become instrumental for the recovery of his health; which by his prayers he regained, as he confessed after upon all occasions, not ceasing to admire, and speak of him with great honour and respect. Thus God was pleased to buoy up the interest and reputation of this excellent bishop, in the midst of his most inveterate enemies, so that he was suffered to keep his station, when almost all the catholic bishops of the East were turned out and banished. Nay, so far was Valens himself pleased with him, that he gave several rich farms, which he had in those parts, for the relief of

those poor and lame whereof Basil took the charge and care. Zonaras relates a passage,² which I deliver to the reader purely upon his authority, that when, at the instigation of the Arians, the Catholics at Nice were turned out of their church, they came to Basil to entreat him to intercede for them. He undertook their cause, and went with them to the emperor, then at Nice, to whom he addressed himself to this purpose: "Sir, the determination of this matter is to be left to God. Let the church-doors be fast shut, and let the Arians stand without and pray to heaven; if the doors open to them of their own accord, let them have the church: if they do not, let us have leave to come and put up our prayers to God; and if they freely open to us, let it be declared, that by the judgment of heaven the church does belong to us; but if they do not open to us, then let it be adjudged to them." The emperor could not decline the proposal, and accordingly the doors were made fast. The Arians came and prayed a long time, but to no purpose; they being withdrawn, the Catholics came, with St. Basil in the head of them, who had no sooner begun their prayers, but the bars burst asunder, and the doors flew open, and gave free passage for the people to enter in; to the no less joy of the one, than to the shame and vexation of the other party.

IV. Valens, after his departure from Cæsarea, stayed some considerable time at Antioch, whence he issued out warrants for the vexation and ejection of the orthodox bishops; amongst whom two especially were in his eye: Meletius,³ the aged bishop of Antioch, a great sufferer for the catholic cause, whom he now banished into Armenia; and Eusebius, bishop of Samosata. This Eusebius was a most zealous champion for the Nicene faith; and at this time, in the hottest of all the danger, put on the habit of a soldier, and went up and down the adjacent countries, and ordained bishops, priests, and deacons, in all those churches which the malice of the faction and the fury of the emperor had left naked and destitute. One of the first things therefore resolved upon in the Arian councils was, that he should be sent far enough out of the way. The order for his banishment was brought to him in the evening, which he advised the messenger to keep secret, plainly telling him, that if it should come to the people's ears, they would infallibly throw him into the river,

² Annal. l. xiii. c. 16.

³ Theodor. l. iv. c. 13, 14. et l. v. c. 4.

and he had no mind to be guilty of his death. Having, without any discomposure, finished the evening service, at night the aged bishop, attended only with one servant to carry his bible and his pillow, took boat, and went down the river all night, till they arrived at Zeugma, a town situate also upon the Euphrates. Early in the morning the news of his departure filled the city with an universal lamentation; and multitudes of people taking boat, followed after him to Zeugma, and with tears besought him to go back with them, and not to expose his flock as a prey to wolves. But in vain: no persuasions or considerations could prevail. Nay, so far was he from alleging for himself, that in this case he must obey God rather than men; that he plainly told them, the Apostles' rule must take place, which expressly commands us, "to be subject to principalities and powers." Then they presented him, some with money, others with clothes, or servants; but he only accepted so much as was barely necessary for his journey; and having fortified their minds with prayers and sermons, and exhorted them to contend earnestly for the apostolic doctrine, set forward towards Thrace, the place allotted for his banishment. But that country being at this time overrun with the Goths, he went higher, and settled himself near the river Danube, where he sojourned till the death of Valens, when he returned home, and was taken up in the public affairs and concerns of the church. And coming to Dolicha, a small city in Syria, a town miserably infected with Arianism, to place an orthodox bishop in that see, a woman threw a tile at him from the top of a house, which mortally broke his skull, and covered his head with a crown of martyrdom. Before he died, he heartily forgave the woman, and took an oath of his friends then about him, that they would not call her to account, nor revenge his death. But it is time we return back to Basil.

V. The emperor left Cæsarea, but Basil's troubles went not away with him. Eusebius,^b uncle to the empress, and at that time governor of the province, had a spleen against him upon the score of religion, but which he sought to cover with other pretexts. Several ways he studied to molest and vex him, and, amongst others, took hold of this occasion. There was at Cæsarea a widow called Vestiana, (if Nyssen means the same person,) rich, and of honourable quality, whose husband was

^b Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 353. Vid. Nicet. Comm. vol. ii. p. 781.

lately dead: courted she was by one that was assessor to the city-judge, who pressed her with such unreasonable and importunate addresses, that she found no better way, than to retire from her own house, and take sanctuary in the church; where, at the communion-table, she solemnly invoked the divine protection, and called in heaven to her assistance. The governor sends immediately to Basil to demand the woman, who refused to deliver her up, letting him know, that the privileges of the church, fenced in by law, were sacred, and the honour of the holy table not to be violated; nor could he deliver her in this case, without betraying the faith. The governor stormed at the denial, and taking no notice where she was, sent officers to search his house, and especially his bed-chamber; insinuating thereby a public suspicion that the holy man had taken her home, and kept her for his own bed. Nor content with this, he commanded Basil, as a criminal, to be brought before him; and sitting down upon the bench, and being swelled with choler and passion, treated him with more than ordinary rudeness and inhumanity. He commanded his cloak to be torn off his shoulders; hold, said Basil, I will not only put off that, but, if you please, my coat also. He told him, he would cause his lean spare carcase to be scourged, to which the other readily yielded: that he would tear him piece-meal with iron pincers; do sir, replied Basil, by these violent lancings you will cure an ill-affected liver, with which you see I am sorely troubled. The noise hereof soon spread itself over the city, with which the people being alarmed, the whole city was presently in an uproar; persons of all ages, trades, and sexes (for the very women put on a masculine zeal and resolution) betaking themselves to arms, and catching up what came next to hand, swords, or spears, or stones, or clubs, or firebrands, or whatever might be an instrument of rage and cruelty, they all pressed forward like a mighty inundation, which no banks could stop; and happy was he thought, that could get the honour to give the first blow; nothing less being resolved on, than the tearing him all in pieces. The governor was sufficiently startled at the news of the danger that he was in; he knew what it was to encounter with armed fury, to which he had given but too much provocation. And now the scene was altered, and he who lately had so stormed and hectorred, quaked and trembled, and his spirit sunk within him. He crouched, and

entreated, and bewailed his miserable and calamitous case; which had been all in vain, had not Basil himself gone out, and both by his presence and discourse charmed and appeased the multitude; thereby at once delivering himself, his client, and his judge. As for the lady, (whose unhappy circumstances had given occasion to this whole passage,) she was (if the same mentioned by my author^c) recommended to the care of Macrina, St. Basil's sister, who superintended a female college of devout women, amongst whom she passed her time in all the strict exercises of a pious and virtuous life.

SECTION V.

HIS ACTS FROM THE END OF THE FOREGOING CONTESTS TILL THE CONTEST BETWEEN HIM AND EUSTATHIUS BISHOP OF SEBASTEA.

His visitation and reformation of his diocese. His great care in correcting the abuses crept into ordinations. His consolatory letters to the people of Antioch. The miserable distractions in that church. Their letter to the bishops of the West. Basil's complaint of the pride and unconcernedness of the Western prelates. The issue of the long schism at Antioch. The modesty and humility of Meletius. The emperor's commission to Basil, to visit the Armenian churches.

BASIL had now got a little respite from the troubles that had of late surrounded him; and he thought no care more immediately necessary, than to take an account of the state of his diocese, and reform those abuses that had crept in by the remissness of his predecessors. The *chorepiscopi* took upon them to ordain the inferior church-officers,^d without the leave or knowledge of the bishop, and trusting wholly to the presbyters and deacons in this matter, admitted them without any just examination of the fitness and qualification of the person; by which means the church was filled with unworthy men, and every village was crowded with officers, who were a scandal to the service of the altar: interest or relation, friendship or neighbourhood, were the best qualifications that most had to recommend them; and many it seems pressed the harder to get in, that they might be freed from a necessity of bearing arms, especially in those parts, where

^c Greg. Nyss. de vit. Macrin. vol. ii. p. 197.

^d Basil. Ep. liv. ad Chorep.

soldiers were more than ordinarily pressed to the service of the wars. And what is beyond this, it was commonly reported,^e that the bishops of his province were guilty of simony; that they sold ordinations, and set a price upon the gifts of the Holy Ghost. "As for the first of these, he charges them to revive the strictness of the ancient discipline, when the custom was, that the persons to be admitted were to be severely tried, and a most exact scrutiny to be made into their past life, what had been the course of their education, what the sobriety of their youth; whether they were not guilty of drunkenness, quarrelling, &c. The care of this was committed to the presbyters and deacons, who reported the matter to the *chorepiscopi*; and they, upon the testimonial given, first gave an account of it to the bishop, and then received them into the ministry of the church. For the recovery therefore of things to this excellent standard, he commanded them to re-enforce the ancient canons; and in the mean time to send him a note of the names of the ministers in every parish, with an account by whom they had been brought in, and what was the course and manner of their life; a copy whereof they should keep for themselves; that they should call them again under examination, and if found fit, continue them, if otherwise, expel them, and return them back to a lay-station: and for the future, use their utmost care and diligence in the trial of such persons; but not take them in, till they had sent him an account of them. As for the other, that of mercenary ordinations, (which, he tells them, he could not at first believe,) he lays before them the greatness of the crime, in some of its more horrid aggravations: that it was double iniquity to cover wickedness under a pretence of piety; it was to sell the Holy Ghost, to barter heavenly for earthly things, and to make a gain of the church, which had the body and blood of Christ committed to it; it was to be a slave to that which is idolatry, and the root of all evil; to prefer a little money before Christ, and, Judas-like, to betray him again for a few pence, who had been once crucified for the world; and that the lands and possessions got by such means, might too truly be styled an *aceldama*, a field of blood; that they were herein more inexcusable than the father of Simonists, having actually done what he only attempted, who yet had that sad doom denounced against him,

^e Epist. liii. s. 1.

‘Thy money perish with thee;’ that it was to no purpose for them to flatter themselves, that they had taken no money before, but only after the imposition of hands; that this was but a trick to delude the world, and cheat their consciences, seeing it was upon that account they received it, whenever they had it. That if these things were true, it was high time they were amended, and that they should quit this trade, which was the very path-way to hell, and not dare to pollute those hands with such ungodly gains, wherewith they were to handle the holy mysteries. That if after this admonition any of them should presume to offend in this kind, he should be immediately banished all communion at the sacred altar, and be forced to seek some other place, where he might freely sell what he had unlawfully bought, the gift of God; ‘For that (says he) we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.’”

II. Nor was his care confined only to his own province, he had a public soul, that engaged him not only to wish well in general, but to lend his particular assistance towards the peace and welfare of foreign churches. The people of Antioch had been miserably harassed by the Arian party at the emperor’s late being there; to take off the edge of whose sorrow, he writes them a letter full of a generous sympathy and compassion:† “withal putting them in mind that God could put a period to their present persecutions; in prospect whereof, they might the better be content to bear them; if they looked upon them as a chastisement for their sins, they might prevent a greater deluge of wrath; if continued, God, who suffered them to be laid on, would give proportionable strength to endure them, and at last crown their faith and patience; in order whereunto, it was not enough to give an instance or two of courage and fortitude, God thinking fit many times to make us exemplary to the world by frequent trials and repeated victories. And at longest, the whole space of man’s life was short, if compared with the duration of that happiness that we expected in the future state: that no sufferings should shake their constancy in the faith, the faith derived from the ancients, ratified by the fathers at Nice, whose creed he there sets down, as the standard of sound orthodox faith.” But alas, the church of Antioch laboured under greater pressures than any that could arise from without, being well-

† Epist. cxl.

nigh ruined by unhappy and almost incurable confusions within itself. For besides the Arians and Apollinarians, who had their several bishops, and held distinct and separate assemblies in that city, the catholic party was broken into a lamentable schism; the people being divided between Meletius, their ancient bishop, and Paulinus, whom Lucifer Calaritanus had constituted there in the reign of Julian; ever since which time the schism had not only smoked, but flamed out, each party striving to advance its interest, and to depress the other. The effects whereof were sad and deplorable, a visible decay of piety, the mutual hatred and animosity of Christians, the increase of heresy, and the open triumph of the enemies of the faith. Basil was infinitely troubled at these dissensions, though he saw it necessary to espouse the Meletian cause, on whose side it is plain the right lay. His first endeavour was, to give a true account of the state of the case, and to engage some persons of known reputation in the composure of this difficult affair. And because Athanasius was the man of the greatest name and vogue at this time in the Christian world, he wrote to him to interpose his authority in this matter; who accordingly sent Peter his presbyter to Antioch, and by his means several despatches were conveyed to Rome, and the bishops of the West, as we have formerly noted in that great man's life. And indeed it was but time for the Meletians to look about them, and to recommend their cause to foreign churches, when Paulinus's party every where gave it out,^s that they had received letters from the Western bishops, which had given suffrage on their side, and had adjudged the see of Antioch to Paulinus: which, if real, had been gotten by surprise, before the others were truly acquainted with the case, as at first Athanasius himself had been prevailed with to send letters to Paulinus.

III. That therefore they might be no longer wanting to the justification of their cause, and to the necessities of the church, a letter is drawn up,^h directed to the bishops of Italy and France, subscribed by Meletius, Eusebius, Basil, and twenty-nine prelates more, in which they lay before them the calamitous state of the Eastern churches, harassed by violence and persecution, public assemblies dispersed, and people forced to pray in fields and solitudes, heresy prosperous, and Arianism grown rampant;

^s Basil. Ep. ccciv. s. 2.

^h Ext. ap. Basil. Ep. xcii.

bad men stepped up into the government of the church, who trampled upon all laws and canons, seized the revenues of the poor, and devoured the portion of the widow and the orphan; and, like people like priest, an universal degeneracy of manners had broke in upon them, the people following the conduct of their teachers, and reckoning themselves securely warranted by their example. Nay, not only did heresy prevail, but (what was the accent of their misery) the Catholics were fallen out amongst themselves; and it was then with them, as it was once with the Jews at the siege of Jerusalem, who were not only perpetually pressed upon by the Roman army from without, but betrayed by their own intestine factions and seditious within. That therefore they besought them, by all that was dear and tender to them, that they would take their case into consideration, and forthwith despatch some of their number to their relief, and that in such a proportion, as that they might by their number, as well as the gravity of the persons, bear a considerable sway in a synodal convention, where they might help to preserve the languishing and declining faith, and reduce things back to the Nicene creed, (now, if ever, like to suffer shipwreck,) extirpate heresy, dissolve the schisms that had risen up, reclaim the erroneous, reconcile dissenters, and restore peace and unity to the church. This epistle, penned (as is probable) by Meletius,ⁱ and then transmitted to Basil, to be by him reviewed and subscribed, was attended with a *commonitorium*, giving a just account of the state of things, and delivered to Sabinus the deacon, who was to give them a more particular account by word of mouth. With him Basil despatched Dorotheus a presbyter, and by him a letter in his own name,^k wherein, with a mighty eloquence, he bewails the miserable face of things amongst them, and pathetically presses them to a speedy assistance, before it was too late. But, alas, these and several other despatches produced no more than a few good words, a letter or two to comfort and condole with them, but no effectual means set on foot to help them.^l The Western prelates sat quiet and warm at home, and cared not to burn their fingers in such a troublesome fire, especially at that distance, where such a journey was to be undertaken, and therefore left them to scuffle it out, and end the matter as well as they could. Plain it is, they no way satisfied Basil's desires and ex-

ⁱ Basil. Ep. cxxix. Vid. Ep. lxxviii.

^k Epist. cexliii.

^l Vid. Epist. cexlii.

pectations, who sharply complains of the *τῆς Ἀντικῆς ὀφρὺς*,^m *the pride and superciliousness of the West*, and how little help was to be looked for from them, that neither understood the truth of their case, nor would be content to learn it; that he was resolved to write to the pope, to let him know, that it did not become him to insult over, and add to the miseries of the afflicted, nor to reckon it a piece of state and greatness to be proud, a thing alone sufficient to render a man odious in the sight of God; and elsewhere he expresses a very passionate resentment, “that he hated the pride of that church.”ⁿ But leaving the security and unconcernedness of the Western churches, let us see what became of the main controversy at Antioch. The emperor Gratian published an edict for the recalling and restoring the catholic bishops that had been ejected and banished by the Arian faction.^o Upon this occasion, several bishops met in a synod at Antioch, where, amongst other things, the wofully distracted state of that church was taken into consideration, and overtures made for a reconciliation; Meletius himself making this offer to Paulinus, and that in the presence of Sapor, the emperor’s officer who had brought the edict to Antioch:^p “Since our Lord (said he) has committed these sheep to my care, and thou hast taken the charge of others, who yet all agree in the same principles of religion, let us join both into one flock, and lay aside all contest about government and precedence. Let us feed the flock in communion, and attend it with equal care. And if the episcopal chair, that stands in the midst, creates any difference, I will throw even that bone of contention out of the way. For placing the Holy Bible in it, I am content that we should sit on each side of it; and if it shall happen that I first depart this life, you alone shall have the government of the flock: but if you die first, then I, according to my power, will take upon me the sole care and government of it.” A modest, and truly peaceable proposal; and although Theodoret says, that Paulinus rejected it, (which perhaps he might do at first,) yet Socrates,^q Sozomen,^r and the fathers in the synod at Aquileia inform us,^s that the agreement was actually made between them; which quieted things a little for the present. But,

^m Epist. x. ad Greg. Theol. vol. iii. p. 54. ed. 1638.

ⁿ Ap. Baron. ad Ann. 372.

^o Theodor. l. v. c. 2.

^p Id. *ibid.* c. 3.

^q Lib. v. c. 5.

^r Lib. vii. c. 3.

^s Syn. Aquil. Epist. ii. Conc. vol. iii. p. 412. ed. reg.

alas, after Meletius's death, and Flavian's election to that see, the wound opened, and bled afresh, and the schism continued several years, till upon the death of Paulinus, and his short-lived successor Evagrius, Flavian put an end to it. But this account has carried us a little out of our way, the very synod at Antioch not being holden there till some months after Basil's death, to the course of whose story we now return.

SECTION VI.

THE CONTEST THAT HAPPENED BETWEEN HIM AND EUSTATHIUS, WITH HIS ACTS TILL HIS DEATH AND BURIAL.

His contest with Eustathius bishop of Sebastea. The unsettledness and subtle practices of that man. Basil charged with undue admitting Eustathius to communion. His rude treatment by Theodotus. Eustathius's great malice towards him. His vindication of himself from being a favourer of Apollinaris. Accused of being unsound in the doctrine of the Trinity, upon what pretence. Several forms of doxology in use at that time. His writing his book *De Spiritu Sancto*, upon what occasion. The monks under his rule incensed against him. His expostulation with Athanasius of Ancyra. A second metropolis erected by Valens in Cappadocia, and why. Basil's contest with Anthimus of Tyana about the metropolitical power. His consolatory letter to the church of Alexandria upon the death of Athanasius. His last sickness, death, and burial. The pomp and solemnity of his funeral. His epitaph.

THIS good man did not barely content himself to stay at home and write letters abroad, but willingly complied with any occasion of travelling up and down, to compose and settle the church's peace, though his weakness and want of health might well have pleaded his excuse. He had received intimation from count Terentius,[†] and by him a commission from the emperor, to go visit the Armenian churches, and to supply the vacant sees, void either by death, or by flight, or banishment under the late persecution. With him Theodotus bishop of Nicopolis was joined in commission, between whom there fell out an unhappy difference, by means whereof that well-designed undertaking came to nothing. The occasion was this. Theodotus had summoned a synod at Nicopolis, and invited Basil amongst the rest; who, at his coming thither, met with Eustathius bishop of Sebastea, a man of a fickle temper and unsettled principles. He had been brought up under Arius at Alexandria,[‡] one of whose

[†] Epist. xcix. s. 3.

[‡] Basil. Ep. cclxiii. s. 3. Vid. Ep. ccclix. s. 9.

prime disciples he professed himself: returning home, he was called to account for his impious principles, and condemned by Hermogenes bishop of Cæsarea, who had been a great stickler against the Arian doctrines in the Nicene council, and the first proposer of that creed. The subtle fellow (who knew how to transform himself into any shape) presented Hermogenes a confession of faith, sound and orthodox, and by that means regained his good opinion, and was by him admitted into orders. After Hermogenes's death, the Proteus changed again, and fled to Eusebius of Constantinople, (formerly bishop of Nicomedia,) the great patron and steersman of the Arian cause. But upon some misdemeanors being forced to fly from thence, he came back into his own country, where he published an apology, wherein he endeavoured to clear himself, but so craftily contrived, that under ambiguous terms he still retained his impious opinions. By such shifting artifices he procured himself to be preferred to the bishopric of Sebastea in the Lesser Armenia, which was no sooner done, but in the synod of Ancyra he drew up an anathematism against the consubstantial faith; thence he went to Seleucia, where he joined with the Arians in that synod; thence to Constantinople, where, happening to espouse the wrong side, (for they were divided into two factions in that council,) he was deposed. To recover his credit, he procured himself to be one of the legates that after the synod at Lampsacus were sent into the West, where by dissimulation he so imposed upon pope Liberius and the Western prelates, that he got their commendatory letters, upon which he was restored in the synod of Tyana. In fine, he had as often changed his faith as it was either for his credit or advantage. Glad was Basil of the opportunity of conversing with him, and plainly told him what things were laid to his charge, and desired him to declare himself, that if he stood to the catholic faith, they might own and embrace him; if otherwise, they would avoid his communion. Two days together he disputed with him, who was seconded by Pœmenius his presbyter, about these matters, and at last so clearly evinced and established the truth, and so fully satisfied all their objections, that they both professed their entire agreement with him; and, as an evidence thereof, they both rose up and went to church to evening prayers, and there solemnly rendered thanks to God, who had disposed them to be of one mind, to think and

speak the same things. But because he knew the inconstancy of the person that he had to deal with, he thought it importèd him to have some better assurance than bare words, and therefore urged him to subscribe a written declaration of his faith. To this end he drew up a form of confession,* wherein was inserted the Nicene creed, and a particular explication of the main articles, with a most explicate renunciation of the errors of Marcellus, Sabellius, and Arius, and an anathema against those who denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost; all which are there laid down in terms as full and perspicuous, as words were able to express them; which Eustathius ratified with this following subscription: "I Eustathius, bishop, having read the above-written declaration to thee, Basil, do acknowledge it to be true, and consent to it; and have subscribed it, together with as many of my brethren as are now with me, Fronto, Severus the chorepiscopus, and some others of my clergy."

II. The noise of this converse and reconciliation was presently carried to Theodotus, who hastily catching up the report, without ever inquiring into the true circumstances of the case, fell foul upon Basil, and not only invited him no longer to the synod, but refused so much as to join at prayers with him. Basil finding little good like to be done, departed for that time, and went home; the news of his holding communion with Eustathius being in the mean time scattered abroad to his disadvantage; nay, Eustathius himself disowning that he had recanted any of his opinions, letters to that purpose being dispersed by him and his friends up and down the country, wherein were also contained very severe and disingenuous reflections upon Basil. This awakened him to take the next opportunity of going again into Armenia; and that he might clear his innocence before a great and venerable person, came to Getasa, where Meletius, the reverend bishop of Antioch, had a grange, whereat he then resided. Hither Theodotus came to him, to whom he gave a naked and impartial account of what had passed in his converse with Eustathius; and how in all points he had come over to him. Theodotus answered, that after Basil's departure, Eustathius had positively denied the agreement, or that ever he had declared any such consent. Basil replied, that he could not easily think so ill of the man, as to imagine he should so lightly

* Ext. Epist. cxxv.

skip from one thing to another, and deny what he had so lately done ; that he who pretended so much to abhor a lie in the common affairs of life, should in so important a matter, so openly out-face a known truth. However, he was resolved to put it upon this issue : he would produce and shew him the declaration of his faith which he had subscribed ; if he owned it, and still continued in that mind, he would hold communion with him ; if not, he would utterly renounce it. Meletius liked the proposal, and upon these terms they seemed agreed, and Theodotus kindly invited them to Nicopolis, himself promising to conduct them afterwards part of their journey. But when they came thither, his mind was altered, and forgetting what had so lately passed at Getasa, he gave fresh vent to his passion, and, contrary to the laws both of hospitality and religion, treated him with great rudeness and contempt. Thus disappointed, Basil left that place, and went to Satala, where in a more peaceable way he treated with the bishops of that country, and communicated counsels with them about settling the affairs of the church ; the people of Satala were importunate with him, that he would constitute and ordain them a bishop. There was, it seems, a quarrel between them and Cyril their bishop, and upon some suggestions they had withdrawn from him. Basil took the matter into his cognizance, and having inquired into the things objected, found them nothing but malicious insinuations, as his very enemies confessed. Whereupon he made them friends, he and his people returning back to a mutual communion. And hence Basil thought good to despatch an advice to count Terentius, to acquaint him with these transactions, and let him know the reasons why he had not more successfully managed the affair that had been committed to him.

III. All this while Eustathius persecuted Basil with all the arts of malice and envy. He wrote letters into all parts to defame and reproach him ;^x refused to give him a meeting in order either to the giving or receiving any satisfaction ; in all synodal conventions he took occasion to cast bitter censures and reflections upon him ; and, as he met with persons for his purpose, would not stick to poison them with rank Arian principles ; and not satisfied with this, he wrote, or rather by a club of his party composed, tedious discourses against Basil, stuffed with little

^x Basil. Ep. cxxx. s. 1.

besides railing and reproach : all which the good man bore with an invincible patience, not returning one word of answer for three years together,^y hoping that in time malice would be weary, and his innocency be unclouded and cleared from all misrepresentations and mistakes. But when he found the reports to gather strength, and meet with entertainment in every place, and that his guilt was concluded from his silence, he thought it high time to awaken his pen to his own defence, writing a prolix epistle to Eustathius himself;^z wherein, with the most incomparable mildness and composure of mind, he wipes off the several aspersions that had been cast upon him, and lays open the arts and contrivances of his enemies. And perhaps he had contented himself with this private vindication, if his unwearied adversaries had not started up a fresh charge against him. For, finding the business of Eustathius thin and empty, they now accused him of being a friend and favourer of Apollinaris the Laodicean,^a a man indeed of excellent parts and learning, but who had lately vented some dangerous and heterodox opinions about the person of our Saviour; that this was the man whose principles, they said, he had espoused, and with whom he maintained an intimate correspondence: and a book was produced containing some dangerous propositions, written perhaps by Apollinaris, but interpolated by themselves, and wholly fathered upon Basil. And now every corner began to ring of Basil's deserting the catholic cause, and communicating with men of heretical principles, and the rumor had spread as far as the Western parts. Whereupon he wrote to several persons, and amongst others to the bishops of the West, to disabuse their credulity, wherein he gives this plain account concerning this matter. That as to Apollinaris, there were some things in him for which he paid him a just reverence; but that he had not so much kindness for, or acquaintance with him, as to be willing to bear his burdens, and to answer for his faults: that he had read some of his books, wherein he met with many pernicious and obnoxious passages, which he greatly disliked, particularly concerning the doctrine of the incarnation, and his book about the resurrection, wherein he evidently reduced that state of things to the Mosaic standard, and ridiculously turned

^y Bas. Epist. cccxvi. s. 1.

^z Epist. cccxxiii.

^a Vid. Epist. cxxix. s. 1. cclxiii. s. 4. cclxiv. s. 3. cccxiii. s. 3. cccxi. s. 2.

Christianity into Judaism: and that he had read no more of his writings was, because he knew how to employ his time better than to hunt after such things, nor did he at all delight in the fancies of the Neoterics. That if Apollinaris had written any thing that gave offence to any, what was that to him? And that if it must be, that one man must answer for another, Eustathius, who had charged him with communion with Apollinaris, (whose neither tutor nor disciple he had been,) should do well himself, first to answer for his own master Arius, and his scholar Aetius: that for the particular accusation, it could have no other spring, nor had it any more foundation to support it than this; that being in Syria above twenty years since, while both he and Apollinaris were laics, he had written a letter to him, not concerning any matters or controversies in religion, (and though there had been any thing less warily written, yet no man, after his being made bishop, ought to be challenged for indifferent and inconsiderable matters spoken while he was a layman,) but merely complimentary, as one friend writes to another; and that if any of his accusers had written at any time to a Jew or Gentile, they would take it ill, if, for no other reason, they should be branded for Jews or Heathens; but that his letter had been corrupted by evil hands and to evil purposes, to make it speak what was never intended; that these were base and unworthy artifices to murder a man's reputation; if they had any clear and unquestionable proofs of his holding communion with the man, let them produce any communicatory letters that had passed between them, either from Basil to him, or from him to Basil; or that he had conversed with any of his clergy, or had admitted them to prayers, or any other instance of communion, and then he would give up the cause; that for the principles themselves given out, he detested and abhorred them, (a thing known to all that knew him;) and for the books pretended, he had neither written them, nor did he approve of them.

IV. But they left him not thus, but, after all the rest, charged him with erroneous tenets about the doctrine of the holy Trinity, and particularly that he denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost.^b This they gave out in all companies, and upon all occasions, whereof he received quick advice and intimation from his friend

^b Epist. cccxxvi. s. 3.

at Nazianzum; ^c who acquainted him, that happening lately to be at a great feast, where a very honourable mention was made of Basil by almost all the company, and especially by himself, a certain professor of the monastic or ascetic life, then at the table, told him, he looked upon this harangue as nothing but flattery and dissimulation; that whatever commendation might be due to Basil in other respects, he was sure he deserved none upon the account of orthodoxy, as one that had shamefully betrayed the truth. Your reason, sir, replied Nazianzen, of so bold a charge? Whereto the other answered, that he was just then come from Cæsarea, from solemnizing the memorial of the martyr Euppsychius, (it was he who had been put to death in the reign of Julian, for offering violence to the idol-temple,) where he had heard Basil preach indeed concerning the Father and the Son with great judgment and accuracy, and beyond the reach of most men, but disparagingly concerning the Holy Spirit; that in this he had delivered his mind obscurely, in doubtful and ambiguous terms; that he studiously shunned a free and open declaration of the truth, preaching rather like a sophister than divine, concealing a double meaning under a smooth rhetorical discourse. Nazianzen calmly rebuked the confidence of the man, and offered what was proper for the vindication of his friend, to whom he sent an account of what had passed. The first rise of all this clamour was no more than this: Basil, in the short gratulatory prayer at the end of his sermons, had not always used the same doxology; ^d but sometimes it ran thus, "Glory be to the Father, with the Son, and the Holy Ghost;" otherwhiles thus, "Glory be to the Father, by the Son, in the Holy Ghost." This variation, it seems, offended some nice and delicate ears then at church, who presently cried out, that these expressions were not only foreign and novel, but inconsistent with one another. And it is the less to be wondered at, they should make these exceptions, when we remember what stirs were heretofore raised at Antioch upon the like occasion, ^e where one part of the congregation used the latter form of doxology in opposition to the other. For the better understanding whereof we are to observe, that there were three or four several forms of doxology in use

^c Greg. Naz. Ep. xxvi. p. 789.

^d Basil. de Sp. S. c. 1.

^e Vid. Theodor. l. ii. c. 24. Sozom. l. iii. c. 20.

amongst Christians,^f especially in the church at Antioch. The first was, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." This was by all Catholics confessed to be orthodox. The second, "Glory be to the Father, by the Son, in the Holy Ghost." The third, "Glory be to the Father, and the Son, in the Holy Ghost." The fourth, "Glory be to the Father, in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost." The first of these was absolutely rejected by the Arians; the three last commonly used by them. And though some of them were capable of a catholic sense, yet could they not be used without great offence, especially of the more simple and undiscerning part of the auditory; as we see here in St. Basil's case, who was immediately run down with a loud noise and clamour. And the report once set on foot was quickly improved into a formal story, which at first he neglected as vain and foolish, but soon after saw a necessity of putting a stop to it. Accordingly, he oft preached upon that argument, and freely declared his mind about it in all companies, especially to Nazianzen, to whom, that he might give the highest assurance, he added this solemn though unusual imprecation,^g that he might for ever be deserted by the Holy Spirit, if he did not adore him as co-essential with the Father and the Son, in glory equal, in majesty co-eternal. And further to silence this malicious calumny, he not only takes notice of it in his epistles at every turn, and adds a particular explication and enforcement of that article concerning the Holy Ghost, but penned several distinct tracts about it, especially that famous and elaborate discourse *de Spiritu Sancto*, dedicated to Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium, at whose request it was undertaken; wherein he largely and acutely handles the whole state of the controversy, and by unquestionable arguments, and the whole suffrage of antiquity, refutes the frivolous cavils and exceptions that had been made against him. But malice is resolved to lay on its load, and to charge home, though not only by different, but self-contradicting evidence. We have heard him fiercely accused for taking away the Godhead of one of the persons in the Trinity; and at the same time he is traduced to have made three several Gods.^h For while in confutation of the Sabellian heresy, he asserted three distinct hypostases or persons in the Godhead; some of his

^f Philost. l. iii. c. 13. Niceph. l. ix. c. 24. Vid. Nicet. Theol. Orth. fid. l. v. c. 30.

^g Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 365.

^h Epist. clxxxix. s. 2.

auditors challenged him with affirming that there were three Gods. And though it was an absurd senseless cavil, yet it spread so far amongst the people, that he was forced from the pulpit to clear himself of it in a set discourse. Thus he was set as a mark, at which his enemies levelled "their sharp arrows, even bitter words." And it had been well if only his enemies had been concerned in it, but what was the misery of it, some of his friends began to be tainted with the common breath, wise and good men lending an ear to the ill things that were spoken of him. The monks that lived under his rule and discipline were so disturbed with the reports concerning him, that they were upon the point of making an open separation from him, whom therefore he endeavours to set right in a large epistle to them.ⁱ And, indeed, so far had they advanced in their disorderly proceedings, that the great Athanasius was forced to write to them, and with some sharpness to rebuke their irregular demeanour towards him, and the unjust and groundless opinions they had conceived of him. Amongst his neighbour-bishops, none seemed more forward to entertain the suggestions of his enemies, or more deeply to resent his supposed apostacy, than Athanasius of Ancyra, a good man, and a zealous promoter of the catholic faith; who accused him to have written things to the subversion of the faith, or at least to have subscribed what others had written to that purpose, for which he spake dishonourably of him, and threatened, if not to excommunicate him, at least to call him to an account for it. Upon intimation whereof, Basil sends him word,^k that such reproachful and unworthy dealings were no surprise to him, considering how prone men are through the degeneracy of human nature to entertain ill surmises, and a bad opinion of other men, but that of all men he least expected it from him; that for his menaces he laughed at them, it was this only troubled him, that a person of so much integrity and usefulness to the church should so far comply with the iniquity of the age, as to prefer common clamours before long experience, and suffer himself to be so easily transported to suspicion and indignation without any just cause or evidence: that if he had had a mind to have satisfied himself in the truth of things, it had been but the pains of writing a short letter, or sending a discreet prudent messenger, or inviting him to have come over

ⁱ Bas. Epist. ccxxvi.

^k Epist. xxv. s. 1.

to him, but to talk thus publicly at all adventure, was to blaze abroad his defamation over all the country; that he could not imagine what was the matter, unless some ill-minded man had affixed his name to some heretical writings, and by that means imposed upon him; however, he entreated him to deal plainly with him, and let him know what it was that had moved his indignation, that so he might not be wanting to his own just defence. The truth is, so perplexed was the good man's mind with the malicious calumnies contrived by his enemies, and entertained by his friends, that he solemnly professed,¹ it made him doubt of the fidelity of mankind, being ready to question whether there was any honesty or faithfulness to be found amongst the sons of men.

V. Nor did his troubles end here,^m a difference happening which created no small disturbance between him and Anthimus of Tyana upon this occasion. Cappadocia had been lately divided into two provinces, Cappadocia *prima* and *secunda*: the prime and capital city of the former was Cæsarea, as it had all along been of the entire province; for the second the city of Tyana was erected into the honour of a metropolis. It had been an ancient and well-fortified place, built upon a great bank raised by Semiramis.ⁿ Stephanus,^o mistaking Strabo's account of it, places it at the foot of mount Taurus, near to the Portæ Ciliciæ: whereas Strabo speaks there of the extent of the prefecture, not of the position of the city. It had continued a place of good account in all times, and was now advanced (out of spite chiefly, as it is probable, to St. Basil) into a metropolis by the emperor Valens, and a good part of the country about it assigned for the province. Hereupon Anthimus bishop of Tyana challenged a metropolitical power and jurisdiction over all the churches in the second Cappadocia, it being but fit, he said, that the ecclesiastic authority should be enlarged according to the bounds of the civil power. Basil was sensible how great a diminution this was to the ancient dignity and jurisdiction of his see, and therefore remonstrated against this intolerable encroachment and usurpation; that this was a violation of settled rights, and an affront to the holy canons; what had the church to do

¹ Epist. ccxxiii. s. 3. et cexliv. s. 4.

^m Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 355. Vid. Basil. Epist. xcviij.

ⁿ Strab. l. xii. p. 537.

^o In voc. Τύανα.

with the alterations of the civil state? the sword and the spirit had different provinces; that his archiepiscopal jurisdiction was founded upon custom and long prescription, and that no man ought to "remove the old land-marks which the fathers had set." The new metropolitan, on the other hand, stickled hard to assert and secure his usurped authority; he called synods, which he held independent upon any other power but his own; seized the ecclesiastical revenues, (and, amongst the rest, the rents of St. Orestes the Martyr in mount Taurus, which, as they were conveying to Cæsarea, he set upon with an armed multitude, taking away the mules and carriages by force,) persuaded the presbyters of the several parishes to own and submit to him, and where he could not bring them over, ejected them, and placed others in their room: by which means infinite confusions did arise, and the peace of the church was broken into scandalous feuds and quarrels. Basil well saw it was in vain to contend: little favour could he expect at court, and as little help from the decision of a council, (the Arians at this time swaying all,) and therefore resolved to make the best he could of a bad bargain, and to repair the breach by erecting some new episcopal sees within his own province; whereby at once he allayed the storm, appropriated the church-revenues of every city to the uses of its particular bishop, and (what was above all) provided better for the necessities of the church; for the dioceses of that country being at that time wide and large, by multiplying of them into a greater number, the church's affairs were more nearly inspected, and greater care taken of the souls of men. While he was thus employed, news came of the death of the great Athanasius, and of that severe persecution that thereupon raged at Alexandria; the Arians sparing neither age, sex, nor person, nor sticking at any instances of fierceness and inhumanity. Our good bishop, heartily afflicted with their case, wrote them a consolatory letter,^p "expressing his exquisite commiseration of their condition, the consideration whereof had almost tempted him to question, whether our Lord had utterly forsaken his church? Whether this was not 'the last hour,' when the great degeneracy and apostacy was to take place, when 'the son of perdition was to be revealed, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped.' However, whatever their sufferings were, they should

^p Basil. Epist. cxxxix.

bear them as became stout champions of Christ ; that if the whole frame of the creation should at length suffer a change and dissolution, what wonder if we, who are so inconsiderable a portion of it, be exposed to miseries and afflictions, which the great Judge of the world would not lay upon us beyond what he would enable us to bear ; that the crowns of martyrdom were ready for them, and the whole choir of holy confessors stretching out their hands to receive them into their number and company ; that they should set before them the examples of those great and good men of old, who went not thither by softness and effeminacy, but ‘ through many tribulations entered into the kingdom of God ;’ and the greater the sufferings, the brighter the crown, ‘ the sufferings of this present time not being worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us :’ that had he been able, he would himself have come to them to behold the generous instances of their patience and constancy, and to be refreshed with their prayers and company ; but, alas, his body was wasted, and sickness kept him prisoner in his bed ; and, besides, wolves lay in wait to make havoc of his flock ; for which reasons he was forced to visit them thus by letter, begging of them to intercede on his behalf with heaven, that for those few days, or rather hours, that he had to live, he might spend them usefully and serviceably to religion and the church of Christ.”

VI. Eight years and some months Basil had now governed the church of Cæsarea,^q when his tottering carcass, undermined by distempers from within, and shattered with continual storms of trouble from without, fell to the ground. Finding himself declining apace, he mustered up so much strength,^r as to ordain some of his followers, that after his decease there might not want a succession to attend the service of the altar. But weakness sensibly growing upon him, forced him to take his bed. The news of his dangerous condition ran round the city, and people, every where awakened with the sense of their loss, flocked about his house, as if, by their prayers and passionate exclamations, they were resolved to arrest that soul that was now taking its flight to heaven, there being none of them but were willing to have redeemed his life with a part of their own. His spirits

^q Nyss. in vit. Macrin. p. 187. Vid. Greg. Naz. in Epitaph. Basil. vol. ii. p. 153.

^r Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 370.

were very low, but he summoned up nature to its last effort; and having piously discoursed awhile to those that were about him, sealed up his last breath with that divine ejaculation, "Into thine hands I commend my spirit." What years he had attained to at the time of his death, is not certain. Some report him not to have exceeded forty-five; but his so often mentioning his old age confutes that beyond all exception. His funeral was attended with a pomp and solemnity suitable to the memory of so great a person. The corpse, being taken upon the shoulders of grave venerable persons, was thronged on all hands; some endeavoured to touch but the ends of his funeral shroud, others the bier whereon he lay, or to get within the shadow of it; some strove to get near the persons that carried him, and they that could not do that contented themselves to see him at a distance: the streets and porticos were all crowded as they went along, and thousands of all ranks and ages joined themselves, some going before, others following after, as they could get along; nor was the noise less than the crowd, the people could not contain their grief; so that the psalms then sung, (as was the custom in those days at funerals,) were drowned by the cries and lamentations of the people. And herein all sorts of persons conspired to make a mournful concert, Jews and Gentiles, strangers and foreigners, bearing a part, and striving to outvie each other's resentment of this common calamity. And indeed it proved a time of mourning in a sense beyond what they intended it: for so great and unavoidable was the crowd, that, in despite of all means used to save them, several were pressed to death, who yet were accounted happy to become the companions of his departure, as if they had offered up themselves as sacrifices at his funeral. The corpse at last was with much difficulty brought to the grave, and laid up in the sepulchre of his fathers, where he, who was himself in some sense both, kept company with bishops and martyrs. The Pseudo-Amphilochius says,^s he was deposited in the church of St. Eupsychius the martyr, where Leontius, one of his predecessors, and some other bishops, had been interred before him. But wherever it was, his dear friend composed his epitaph,^t which, though somewhat prolix, we shall here insert.

^s Orat. in S. Bas. p. 119. vit. Patrum per Rosweydam.

^t Naz. Carm. lxiv. vol. ii. p. 152.

ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΜΕΓΑΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟΝ

ΕΠΙΚΗΔΕΙΑ ΕΙΤΕ ΕΠΙΤΑΦΙΑ.

ΣΩΜΑ δίχα ψυχῆς ζώειν πάρος, ἢ ἐμὲ σείο,
 Βασίλιε Χριστοῦ λάτρι φίλ' ὠϊόμην.
 Ἄλλ' ἔτλην, καὶ ἔμεινα. τί μέλλομεν. οὐ μ' ἀναείρας,
 Θήσεις ἐς μακάρων σὴν τε χοροστασίην,
 Μὴ με λίπης μὴ, τύμβον ἐπόμνυμι, οὐ ποτε σείο
 Λήσομαι, οὐδ' ἐθέλων. Γρηγορίοιο λόγος.
 Ἦνίκα Βασιλίοιο θεόφρονος ἤρπασε πνεῦμα
 Ἡ τριάς, ἀσπασίως ἔνθεν ἐπειγομένου,
 Πᾶσα μὲν οὐρανὴ στρατιὴ γήθησεν ἰόντι,
 Πᾶσα δὲ Καππαδοκῶν ἔστονάχησε πόλις,
 Οὐκ οἶον, κόσμος δὲ μέγ' ἴαχεν, ὄλετο κήρυξ,
 Ὦλετο εἰρήνης δεσμὸς ἀριπρεπέος.
 Κόσμος ὅλος μύθοισιν ὑπ' ἀντιπάλοισιν ἀεικῶς
 Σείεται ὁ τριάδος κλῆρος ὁμοσθενέος.
 Αἰ αἰ Βασιλείου δὲ μεμυκότα χεῖλεα σιγῇ
 Ἐγρεο, καὶ στήτω σοῖσι λόγοισι σάλος.
 Σαῖς τε θνητολίησι. σὺ γὰρ μόνος ἴσον ἔφηνας,
 Καὶ βίον μύθῳ, καὶ βιοτῆτι λόγον.
 Εἰς θεὸς ὑψιμέδων, ἕνα δ' ἄξιον ἀρχιερῆα
 Ἡμετέρη γενεὴ εἶδέ σε Βασίλιε,
 Ἄγγελον ἀτρεκίης ἐριηχέα, ὄμμα φαεινὸν
 Χριστιανοῖς, ψυχῆς κάλλεσι λαμπόμενον,
 Πόντου Καππαδοκῶν τε μέγα κλέος εἰσέτι καὶ νῦν.
 Λίσσομ' ὑπὲρ κόσμου ἴστασο δῶρ' ἀνάγων.
 Ἐνθάδε Βασιλείοιο Βασίλειον ἀρχιερῆα
 Θέντο με Καισαρές, Γρηγορίοιο φίλον,
 Ὅν περὶ κῆρι φίλησα, θεὸς δὲ οἱ ὄλβια δοίη,
 Ἄλλὰ τε, καὶ ζωῆς ὡς τάχος ἀντιάσαι
 Ἡμετέρης. τί δ' ὄνειαρ ἐπὶ χθονὶ δηθύνοντα
 Τῆκεσθ', οὐρανίης μνωόμενον φιλήεις.
 Τυτθὸν ἔτι πνεύσεκας ἐπὶ χθονοὶ, πάντα δὲ Χριστῷ
 Δῶκας ἄγων, ψυχὴν, σῶμα, λόγον, παλάμας,
 Βασίλειε Χριστοῦ μέγα κλέος, ἔρμ' ἱερώην,
 Ἐρμα πολυσχίστου νῦν πλέον ἀτρεκίης.
 ὦ λόγοι, ὦ ξυνοὶς φιλήεις δόμος, ὦ φίλ' Ἀθῆναι,
 ὦ θεοῦ βιότου τηλόθε συνθεσίαι,

Ἴστε τόδ', ὡς Βασίλειος ἐς οὐρανὸν, ὡς ποθέεσκε,
 Γρηγόριος δ' ἐπὶ γῆς, χεῖλεσι δεσμὰ φέρων.
 Καισαρέων μὲγ' ἄεισμα φαάντατε ὦ Βασίλειε,
 Βροντῆ σείο λόγος, ἄστεροπὴ δὲ βίος.
 Ἄλλὰ καὶ ὡς ἔδρην ἱερὴν λίπες, ἤθελεν οὕτω
 Χριστὸς, ὅπως μίξῃ σ' ὡς τάχος οὐρανόις.
 Βένθεα πάντ' ἐδάης τὰ πνεύματος, ὅσά τ' ἔασι
 Τῆς χθονίης σοφίης, ἔμπνοον ἱρὸν ἔης,
 Ὀκταετῆ λαοῖο θεόφρονος ἠγία τείνας.
 Τοῦτο μόνον τῶν σῶν ὦ Βασίλει' ὀλίγον.
 Χαίροις ὦ Βασίλειε, καὶ εἰ λίπες ἡμέας ἔμπης.
 Γρηγορίου τόδε σοι γράμμ' ἐπιτυμβίδιον,
 Μῦθος ὄδ' ὃν φιλέεσκες, ἔχεις χρέος ὦ Βασίλειε
 Τῆς φιλίης, καὶ σοι δῶρον ἀπευκτότατον.
 Γρηγόριος Βασίλειε τεῇ κονίῃ ἀνέθηκα
 Τῶν ἐπιγραμματίων τήνδε δυωδεκάδα.

THUS RENDERED BY AN INGENIOUS FRIEND.

GREAT saint, whose soul upon the wings of love,
 Toward the dearest Jesus still did move ;
 I thought I should not live, when thou wert dead,
 More than my body when my soul were fled ;
 But I unworthy of thy knowledge stayed,
 Endured the loss, and friendship disobeyed ;
 Will not my Basil to my rescue come,
 And take me with him to his glorious home ?
 Must I stay here disconsolate and alone ?
 Time never shall, I by thy tomb do swear,
 Efface thy memory to me so dear.

When the Almighty Wisdom called away
 Basil, who longed to see that happy day ;
 How did the flaming seraphim rejoice,
 And every sprightly angel tune his voice,
 While Cappadocia groaned a doleful noise ?
 And the universe in extasy, and cries,
 Attendant was at the sad obsequies ;
 Exclaiming, the transcendent preacher's dead,
 And now all-charming peace is banished ;
 The world's in mutiny, while some do fight
 For the deity of Christ. others deny it.

Rise, thou most skilful pilot, from thy sleep,
 Allay the tempest, smooth the ruffled deep,
 Thy words, thy prayers, the world in awe will keep.
 Whose wisdom only taught thee to entwine
 Angelic actions with discourse divine.
 There's one Almighty God, and none but thee,
 This age can find fit his high-priest to be ;
 Truth's boldest champion, and the Christian's light,
 Whose soul was beautified with all that's bright.
 Honour of Pontus, Cappadocia's glory,
 Whose praise shall fill present and future story ;
 We beg thee, let thy prayers ascend on high,
 To impetrate the world's felicity.

“ Cæsarea's citizens within this grave,
 Me their beloved primate buried have ;
 Who to my Gregory such affection bore,
 That nothing here on earth could make it more.
 Great God, to him thy better blessings give,
 And shortly let him in thy palace live,
 Who, warmed with flames that from above descend,
 Dreams out those days which he on earth doth spend.”

While thou 'mong men didst breathe, Heaven did command
 Thy devout soul, smooth tongue, and active hand,
 Honour of Jesus, and his priests' defence,
 Truth's guardian, which we've sadly mangled since,
 How is the memory of our past talk dear,
 Athens how pleasant, when we conversed there ?
 Happy the time we jointly did agree
 To practise the divine philosophy.
 While now the happy Basil has attained
 His journey's end, and left me dumb behind ;
 Alive, thou wert Cæsarea's chiefest praise,
 Thunder thy words, thy life like lightning's rays.
 But soon thou left'st that venerable chair,
 To visit Jesus, and with angels share ;
 Sacred and human learning thou didst know,
 Nothing above thy reach was, much below ;
 Eight years thou rul'dst thy diocese, and then
 Too soon for it return'dst to heaven again.

Farewell, my Basil, since I'm left behind ;
 Accept this epitaph from thy troubled friend.
 'Tis the same friend, who now thus speaks to thee,
 Whose beloved words made once sweet harmony ;
 This debt my friendship to thy virtue pays,
 Though thy blest soul may slight my meaner praise ;
 Who to thy ashes dedicates this verse,
 And with his tears bedews thy sacred hearse.

SECTION VII.

A CHARACTER AND ACCOUNT OF HIS PERSON, TEMPER, AND WRITINGS.

His character. His natural abilities, and acquired improvements. The extent of his learning in all faculties. His incomparable style. The judgment of the ancients concerning it. The high commendation of his eloquence given by Liberius. His moral and divine accomplishments, piety, zeal, constancy, temperance, contempt of the world, charity, humility, peaceable-mindedness. The description of his person. His works, whereof some only ascribed to him. His genuine distinguished into commentaries, controversies, sermons, encomiastics, epistles, and canonical tracts. A distinct survey of each class. His ascetic constitutions. His liturgy, how far genuine. Nazianzen's high encomium of his writings.

It is no easy matter to attempt his just character ; Nazianzen himself despaired of it, and if his pencil could not draw him to the life, it must not be expected from a meaner hand. We shall only therefore remark some main lines and strokes. Considered in his natural faculties, he was a man of a very clear and perspicacious apprehension, a nimble and ready wit, a smart dexterous reasoning, a deep and solid judgment. His acquired abilities highly improved, and added an incomparable lustre and ornament to his natural perfections. As he wanted no advantages of education, so he was not wanting in industry and diligence to make use of them, whereby he soon became a most comprehensive scholar, *καὶ πάσης παιδείας εἰς ἄκρον ἐηλακῶς,*^t and attained the utmost empire in all polite and useful learning, wherein he left no path untrodden ;^u and yet was as conversant in all, as any other man is in any single science, while he himself was as accurate in every art, as if he had studied none but that. He

^t Suid in voc. Βασίλ.

^u Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 332. Vid. Nyss. Orat. in Bas. vol. ii. p. 911.

was eminent in grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, astronomy, geometry, arithmetic, physic, and what not? He had rifled all the treasures of the Gentiles, and searched into the most secret retirements of philosophy and secular learning; in which respect Philostorgius says,^w and perhaps truly, Athanasius was but a child to him. Nor content with this, he chiefly applied himself to the knowledge of the holy scriptures, and the principles of Christian theology: he perfectly understood all the sublime and nice speculations of those times, and knew the subtleties and subterfuges of the several sects, and where to countertermine and blow them up. He was, in short, says his own brother, ἀριστέως περιδέξιος, a two-handed champion; who, being armed both with divine and human literature, beat down his adversaries wherever he came, and successfully encountered both heathens and heretics, seldom failing to come off a conqueror. This made his judgment so oft desired, and so much relied on in weighty and important cases; this made the heresiarchs of those times so afraid to meddle with him, choosing rather to rail at him at a distance, than to engage with him in a close dispute. Nay, Eunomius himself, though a man otherwise of a steeled forehead, yet when he undertook to answer what Basil had writ against him, suppressed his book for many years, and would not publish it till after St. Basil's death, when he promised himself he should be without the reach of confutation.

II. His style and way of writing is admirable, and almost inimitable; it is proper, perspicuous, significant, soft, smooth, and easy, and yet persuasive and powerful, and flowing from him with a natural and unaffected grace and sweetness. His accuracy in philosophy did not vitiate the terseness and fluency of his style, nor the softness and elegance of his expressions weaken the nervous force and conviction of his arguments. Philotheus, patriarch of Constantinople, tells us,^x it was observed as peculiar to him, that he so subtly penetrates, searches, adjusts, and treats of the most sublime and intricate speculations of theology, as at once both to inform the mind, and to move the passions; that he seems to speak nothing but life, and to breathe a soul into the dullest argument he discourses of. And Photius,^y one

^w Ap. Suid. in voc. Βασίλ.

^x Orat. in Bas. Greg. et Chrys. bibl. patrurn, Gr. Lat. vol. ii. p. 330. ed. 1624.

^y Cod. CXLI.

of Philotheus's predecessors in that see, a man, if any other, able to pass sentence in these matters, says of him, that for the persuasive and panegyric way of discoursing, no other pattern need be set; no, not that of Plato or Demosthenes themselves, though so much admired and magnified by the ancients. Erasmus prefers him before the most famed orators of Greece,² in whom he finds something short of him. Pericles spake like thunder, but it was without art; Lysias evaporated into emptiness and subtlety; Phalareus was pleasant, but wanted gravity; Isocrates lost the native grace of speech by too-affected periods; and Demosthenes himself, besides other things, had this fault, that his compositions were too forced and elaborate. Whereas in this great man, neither art nor nature, neither study nor exercise, were wanting to render him most accomplished. Nay, he sticks not to give him the preeminence of all the great ecclesiastic worthies of his time: Athanasius was excellent at teaching, but defective in human learning; Nazianzen a great man, but too greedy of a smart period, and a florid style; Nyssen was content with a pious simplicity; Chrysostom, eloquent indeed, but diffusive and luxuriant, and over-apt to run out into needless digressions. But now in Basil, the nicest palate could not find that which might distaste. His way of expressing himself simple and natural; he spake with all the advantages of art, and yet made no ostentation of any thing elaborate and artificial; he shewed himself master of philosophy at every turn, and yet without any affectation, nor ever made use of foreign arts, but when they might be subservient to piety and religion. In expounding scripture he is wary and cautious, and yet plain and perspicuous; in his encomiastic way, he so admirably accommodated himself to popular auditories, that he spake nothing but what the people understood, and yet the learned admired. Whatever argument he manages, it is always attended with a chaste and pleasant eloquence, that falls naturally from him. His discourses lose much of their native grace and beauty, when derived into any other language. And therefore George Trapezuntius, though a learned man, and a Greek born, undertaking the translation of his works, was forced to give over, and confess the Roman tongue wanted something to reach the elegance and ornaments of his language. The truth is, if in any one thing he excelled more than other,

² Præf. in Edit. Gr. Bas. et inter Epp. l. cclxxxviii. ep. 7.

it was eloquence. It was this principally that endeared him to Libanius, the great professor and master of eloquence at that time, who magnifies him upon this account as the wonder of the age. And when once, in an assembly of great and honourable persons, a letter from Basil was delivered to him,^a he had no sooner read it, but in a kind of triumph he cried out, "We are overcome." The assembly wondered at the passage, and inquired the reason; "We are overcome," said he, "in the elegancy of epistles; it is Basil that is the conqueror, who is my friend, and for that reason I rejoice." The company not satisfied, commanded the letter to be read, and then unanimously gave sentence that it was so indeed; nor would Alypius, who had read the letter, part with it, till some time after he was hardly prevailed with to restore it. And indeed how much Libanius (notwithstanding the prejudices of his religion, and the common emulations of learned men) admired the eloquence of this great man, (for surely they were something more than compliments he bestowed upon him,) is abundantly evident from the epistles still extant that passed between them.

III. We have seen what were his natural and acquired perfections, let us next survey him in his moral and divine accomplishments. He was a man acted by the true genius and spirit of religion; he loved God sincerely, whose honour and the interests of religion he preferred infinitely before his own ease and safety. He frequently bewailed the unhappy dissensions of those times,^b and set himself to consult and promote the peace of the church; to the settlement whereof he thought all other things ought to give way. A passionate admirer, and a most resolute assertor of truth, and of that "faith that was once delivered to the saints." For though his enemies, to serve their own ends by blasting his reputation, did sometimes charge him with corrupting the Christian doctrine, and entertaining impious and unorthodox sentiments, and that too in some of the greater articles; yet the objection, when looked into, did quickly vanish, himself solemnly professing upon this occasion,^c that however in other respects he had enough to answer for, yet this was his glory and triumph, that he had never entertained false notions of God, but had constantly kept the faith pure and inviolate, as

^a Vid. Ep. Liban. inter Bas. Ep. cccxxviii.

^b Vid. Epist. lxxix.

^c Epist. cccxiii. s. 3.

he had received it from his ancestors. His vigorous opposition of heresy was sufficiently seen in his attempts against the principal sects then on foot, the followers of Arius, Sabellius, Photinus, Marcellus, Macedonius, Eunomius, Apollinaris, who felt the effects of his great abilities, and his masculine zeal. And herein no proposals how advantageous soever could bias him, no dangers terrify or unsettle him. Witness his unshaken constancy under the malicious insinuations of his enemies; the potent assaults of the great ministers of state; his generous slighting at once both the frowns and favours of the Arian emperor; his writing letters at the same time to confirm the wavering and retrieve the lapsed, when it was not safe to do it at less than the peril of his head; and when, like Elijah in the reign of Ahab, he was in a manner left alone to stand up for a good cause in an evil time. Nor was his life in all other instances less pious and exemplary, being conducted by the strictest rules and measures of religion. He lived above the world,^d and with a noble scorn looked down upon the glory, the pomps, plenty, grandeur, luxuries, and pleasures of it; his riches were to possess nothing, and he esteemed the cross beyond all other treasures. His appetites were most chaste and regular, and which he had perfectly subdued to the discipline of mortification and self-denial. His diet mean and small; so little, that he seemed to live without it, and to have put on beforehand the life of angels. His wardrobe afforded but one coat and a *pallium*, the cold ground was his bed, bread and salt his ordinary bill of fare, and the next spring his cellar, whither he retired to quench his thirst. But what he wanted towards himself, he made up in care towards others, in his incomparable charity to the poor. What estate he had (which was not inconsiderable) he disposed that way, and where his own fell short, he persuaded a liberal supply out of the purses of the rich, wherewith he erected and endowed a noble hospital without the city, whereinto he gathered all the sick, the lame, the diseased, that were about the city, unable to help themselves, and not easily helped by others. So that the streets and highways were no longer pestered with those lamentable spectacles of want, anguish, and misery, that had lately filled every corner. Here all necessaries were provided for them, the superintendency whereof himself undertook; and that he might

^d Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 357, etc.

set a good example to others, he stooped to the meanest offices about them, not disdaining to kiss and embrace the worst of the patients, at whose stench and sores others were ready nicely to recoil and start back. By which it is evident how unjustly he was accused by some of being proud, a weed not likely to thrive in so harassed and mortified a soul; his kind behaviour, known condescension to all ranks of men, his equal and patient bearing the freest reproofs and admonitions of his friends,^e being a sufficient confutation of that groundless slander. It was no doubt the gravity and constancy of his temper, and his uncourtly incompliance with some men's humours, fastened that charge upon him. Nor was he of a sour and morose disposition; in company none more pleasant and cheerful, none more facetiously witty; when he reprov'd, none did it more gently, so as neither the fierceness of the reproof made the person insolent, nor the softness of it rendered it ineffectual. He was, in short, a calm, harmless, and quiet person: and though in his latter time, through the iniquity of the age he lived in, he became a man of strife and contention, yet in himself he was of an humble and peaceable temper; kind to, and beloved by all good men, and revered by his greatest enemies. If, after all, any one be curious to know what kind of body it was that clothed so brave and great a soul, we find him thus described:^f he was tall and straight, lean and meagre, of a brown complexion but somewhat ruddy, his nose of a just dimension, his eye-brows large and almost circular, his look musing and thoughtful, few wrinkles in his face, and those not unbecoming; his visage long, his temples somewhat hollow, and his beard prolix. In his younger days he was of a fresh and florid complexion,^g of an healthful and well-built constitution, till over-intense study, excessive fasting and abstinence, and the many troubles he met with, pulled him down, impaired his health, and subjected him to habitual weaknesses and infirmities, (whereof he complains almost in every epistle,) besides those more violent distempers that frequently rushed upon him. I only add, that so great was the veneration which the world then had for him, that many affected even his bodily imperfections,^h

^e Vid. Epist. cxxlv. s. 1.

^f Mæn. Græc. τῆ α' τοῦ ἱανου. sub. lit. αἰου. Vid. etiam. Ex. cod. Vatic. ap. Bar. ad Ann. 378.

^g Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 323.

^h Id. ibid. p. 370.

and his odd accidental customs, as an ornament ; striving to imitate the paleness of his looks, the fashion of his beard, the manner of his gait, his sparingness of speech, deep musing and thoughtfulness, his garb and apparel, and the manner of his diet and lodging ; things in respect of him purely casual and unaffected.

IV. Of the works that he left behind him, some have been buried under the ruins of time, there being evidence enough that he wrote more than what have been transmitted to us. Amongst those that remain, some are unduly ascribed to him, in which number are the ten and eleven Homilies upon the *Hexaemeron*, generally thought (but, for any thing I see, without any cogent reason) to have been added by his brother Nyssen ; the *Encomium vitæ solitariæ*, or *de laudibus Eremitæ*, nowhere found in Greek, and in truth is a piece of Peter Damian, besides several others extant in the last volumes of his works. His genuine writings consist of commentaries, controversies, sermons, encomiastics, epistles, and canonical tracts. Amongst the first are his commentaries upon the first sixteen chapters of the prophet Isaiah, unjustly questioned by some, chiefly because not mentioned by Suidas or St. Jerome, as if they pretended to deliver an exact catalogue of all the writings of the ancients, when they so often confess there were many which they had never seen. However, this defect is abundantly supplied by the plain evident testimonies of Simon the Metaphrast, Antonius Melissa, Maximus the monk, Damascene, Oecumenius, and Tarasius patriarch of Constantinople, who all cite it as the undoubted work of our Cappadocian prelate. For his controversies none challenge more consideration than his *egregii Libri*, (as St. Jerome calls them, *ἐξαιρετοὶ λόγοι*, as Suidas out of him,) his incomparable books against Eunomius, wherein with such a mighty force he batters down the impious assertions of that bold man. The whole consists of five books at this day, but the two last seem not to be of equal authority with the other, having no earlier testimony than the times of the Florentine council to support them ; nor are they found in the most ancient manuscripts, not to mention the difference of the style. And indeed, since Eunomius's reply (which he published not till after Basil's death) consisted but of three books,ⁱ it is not unreasonable to conjecture that Basil originally wrote no more. Hither also,

ⁱ Vid. Phot. Cod. CXXXVIII.

as being partly polemical, we may refer his book *de Spiritu Sancto*, which Erasmus first, and since him many, do with great clamour and confidence cry out to be corrupted and interpolated, especially in the addition of the three last chapters, but certainly without any just reason; the exceptions to it being weak and trifling, so inconsiderable, that the learned Casaubon (who, being better versed than ordinary in the rites and monuments of the ancient church, saw that the main objection from apostolical traditions would not bear the stress that was laid upon it) fairly gives up the cause.^k His sermons are either upon some parts of scripture, or upon particular subjects. In the first class are his nine homilies upon the *Hexaemeron*, or the six days' creation; a piece (says Suidas^l) justly to be admired, and which Nyssen affirms,^m ought to give place to nothing but the inspired volumes. It was early translated by Eustathius into Latin, and by him dedicated to his kinswoman Syncretica the deaconess. A translation so accurate, that Cassiodore is not afraid to say,ⁿ that it has matched the elegancy of the original composition. Such also are his twenty-two homilies upon the Psalms, out of which were taken the *excerpta* extant in the ancient *catenas*, and are quite another thing from the *scholia* upon the Psalms, inserted into the Latin editions of this father, borrowed for the most part from St. Chrysostom and Theodoret. The prologue to these homilies St. Augustine, or some for him, translated into Latin, and clapped before his tracts upon the Psalms. And therefore, when Rivet affirms,^o (and makes Fronto Ducaeus vouch for him,) that this prologue is St. Augustine's, translated by somebody into Greek, and attributed to St. Basil, he is greatly out himself, and wrongs that learned Jesuit, who plainly asserts the quite contrary.^p Besides these, he has several single homilies upon particular subjects, both theological and moral, as *de fide, baptismo, penitentia, &c. de avaritia, invidia, ebrietate, &c.*; in all which he discourses finely, and admirably accommodates himself to the necessities and capacities of his hearers. In his encomiastic orations, (wherein his peculiar talent lay,) he elegantly displays the faith and patience, the courage and constancy of those who had suffered for the faith;

^k Casub. exerc. xxxiii. in Baron. p. 520. xliii. p. 550.

^l In voc. Βασίλ.

^m In Hexaem. vol. i. p. 5.

ⁿ Divin. Lect. c. 1.

^o Crit. Sac. l. iii. c. 20.

^p Not. in Psal. Basil. p. 16.

with suitable accounts of things, and proper exhortations to the imitation of their virtues; as in his oration upon the forty martyrs that suffered at Sebastea in Armenia, upon the martyrdom of Gordius, Julitta, &c. Epistles he wrote many, *ὧν οὐδὲν ἄμεινον*,⁹ says Suidas, than which nothing can be more excellent and incomparable, and which Photius commends as the true *norma* and character of epistolary writing;† four hundred and twenty-seven of them are still extant, (amongst which are interspersed some few from Nazianzen and Libanius,) wherein, besides the inward character of the man drawn by his own pen, we have many useful passages of those times, and thence we have extracted a good part of his life. Besides these, he has an epistolary discourse to Chilo his scholar, who had quitted the ordinary rules of the monastic institution, and turned Anchoret, wherein he gives him many excellent admonitions and rules for that state of life; a letter to a monk, and another to a devout virgin, who had committed folly together, where in a passionate strain of eloquence he represents the aggravations of their crime, and excites them to repentance. He has also three canonical epistles to Amphilochius of Iconium, at whose desire he drew up a body of rules and directions, wherein he states the nature of the crimes most usually incident to human life, and prescribes the several penances that were fit to be undergone before absolution, agreeably to the sense of the ancients, and the established canons of the church. But these three more properly belong to the last class of his works which I mentioned, viz. his canonical tracts; amongst which I place first, his ascetic rules and constitutions mentioned by St. Jerome and others, wherein, with great acuteness and elegancy, he resolves doubts and interrogatories raised out of scripture, and lays down excellent rules for those that engaged in a monastic life. It is true Sozomen tells us,⁸ this work was ascribed to Eustathius bishop of Sebastea; but then he says, it was composed by Basil, and that there were only some that reported it to have been written by Eustathius. Indeed, the unanimous suffrage of antiquity (as is plain from Jerome, Rufinus, Justinian the emperor, Photius, Suidas, &c.) constantly adjudge it to St. Basil. It consisted of old, (as Photius informs us,†) of two books; the first whereof contained those short tracts *de Judicio Dei*, *de Fide*, and some others, placed

⁹ In voc. Βασίλ.

† Cod. CXLIII.

⁸ Lib. iii. c. 14.

† Cod. CXCI.

at this day before his ethics; the second his discourses *de Institutione Monachorum*, wherein he represents the character of a Christian, pressing on towards perfection; and these as a kind of preface to his *ῥοι κατὰ πλάτος*, or *Regulæ fusius disputatæ*, consisting of fifty-five questions propounded by the monastics, with St. Basil's answers: which are followed by three hundred and thirteen *ῥοι κατὰ ἐπιτομήν*, or shorter rules delivered in the same way; exactly according to the account which Photius has given of them; so that there can be no doubt but they are the same. In the copy by which the Venice edition of anno 1553 was printed, there was a *scholium* added, implying that that manuscript had been transcribed from a most ancient copy brought out of Pontus, and the places where Basil had lived an ascetic life, and had been compared with the copy found in St. Basil's own hospital at Cæsarea, out of which were added twenty-seven chapters more, together with the penalties that were to be inflicted upon delinquent monks. These constitutions, Rufinus tells us," he designed to turn into Latin, for the benefit of the Western monks, and he afterwards performed it, though he contracted them into a narrower compass. Of some affinity with these, are his *Ἠθικά*, or *Morals*, containing eighty divine rules, each backed with apt select texts of scripture, for the conduct and government of a holy life.

V. Under this head of canonical tracts, I may take leave to place his liturgy, which, as to the substance of it, I make no doubt to be truly his. For seeing Nazianzen expressly tells us," that after his return to Cæsarea, he not only drew up rules for the monastic life, which he delivered both by word and writing, but also composed *εὐχῶν διατάξεις*, "orders and forms of prayers," and appointed *εὐκοσμίας τοῦ βήματος*, "decent rites and ornaments for the altar;" and since himself elsewhere gives us an account of the form of public service used in the oratories of his institution,* answerable to this liturgy, and agreeable (as he tells us) to all the churches of God, I can see no reason why it should be robbed of the title which it has always claimed to so great a hand. Not but that, in its present frame and constitution, it is much changed from its original simplicity, having received several additions and interpolations in after-times, as a stream, though never so clear at the fountain-head, contracts

" Lib. ii. c. 9.

* Orat. xx. p. 340.

* Epist. ccvii. s. 4.

mud and filth by the several channels through which it passes. But these being discharged, (as it is no hard matter for a man versed in church-antiquity to separate the chaff from the wheat,) the rest will justly entitle itself to this great man's composition, and be found consonant enough to the customs and usages of that age. Hence, the older the copies of it, still the more pure and unexceptionable: thus the Syriac liturgy of St. Basil, which Masius received from Moses Mardenus his master, and turned into Latin,^y is much more concise, and free from many of those obnoxious passages which are crept into the Greek copies extant at this day. It has till this last age uncontrolably maintained its title, and is still used with great reverence and devotion by the Greek church, upon some of their more solemn times, that of St. Chrysostom, by reason of its shortness, being in ordinary use; which two liturgic toms, *ὡς ἀνέκαθεν παρεδόθησαν ἡμῖν καὶ ἐπεγνωθήσαν*, have from ancient times been transmitted to us, and approved and used as authentic, says Jeremias,^z the Greek patriarch, in his answer to the Wittenberg divines. I shall have done with the consideration of his works, when I have observed, with how much veneration they were received by the ancients; and I need instance in no more, than in that eulogium which Nazianzen, who best knew, and was best able to judge, gives of them from his own experience. "Since he is gone, (says he,^a) all pleasure and delight ceases; the only satisfaction we enjoy is the books and writings he has left behind him, in whose stock all that write after him must henceforth trade. Let the ancients now sit down in silence, and whatever they have written for the explication of the holy volumes; a new writer is start up, and he is with us the best scholar, who most converses with, reads, understands, and digests his writings, which alone are sufficient to instruct in all the paths of learning. This only will I say concerning him. As oft as I take up his *Hexaemeron*, and read it out, I converse with my great Creator, understand the reasons and methods of the creation, and do much more reverence and admire my Maker than I was wont to do, when I barely viewed the frame of things. When I read his books against heretics, methinks I see the flames of Sodom reducing these bold and impious tongues to ashes; or behold the tower of Babel insolently attempted,

^y Antw. edit. ann. 1569.^z Respons. i. c. 13.^a Orat. xx. p. 362, 363.

but powerfully dissipated and destroyed. When I turn over his book *de Spiritu Sancto*, I meet with the true God; and insisting upon those grounds of theology which he has laid down, am enabled confidently to preach and declare the truth. When I peruse his other expositions, which in several ways he made for the instruction of the ignorant, I find myself transported beyond the letter and superficialities of words, and carried up from one degree of light unto another, till at last I arrive at the highest point. While I read his encomiastics upon the martyrs, I despise the body, and am joined in consort with the heavenly chorus, and inspired with an eager desire and spirit of martyrdom. Do I cast my eyes upon his ethics, his moral and practical discourses, I am presently engaged to “cleanse myself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit,” turned into the temple of God, and the organ of the Holy Ghost, to set forth the praises of the divine power and glory, and am refined into a God-like temper, transformed into another thing than I was before.” Thus far that excellent man, and more he has there to the same purpose.

SECTION VIII.

AN ACCOUNT OF HIS NEAREST RELATIONS.

His relations and parents. The pious death of his mother Emmelia. The singular piety and strictness of life of his sister Maerina. The immature death of his hopeful brother Naueratius. His brother Gregory, bishop of Nyssa. A short account of his brother Peter, bishop of Sebastea. The happiness of his parents in having three sons eminent bishops at one time. His writings enumerated.

BEFORE we conclude St. Basil's Life, it may perhaps reflect some light upon his story, to give a brief account of his nearest relations. His father Basil (whom some,^b I know not by what authority, do in his latter days make a bishop, or a priest at least) died while his children were yet very young. His mother Emmelia, after the death of her husband, and care taken in the education of her children, at the persuasion of her daughter Maerina, and that she might be near her son Basil, quitted the world, and retired after him into the wilderness, where she

^b Labb. de Script. Eccl. in Basil. in Addend. vol. i. p. 734. See num. 1. of this Life.

planted herself in a village on the other side of the river Iris,^c that so she might receive the comfort of his frequent visits, and whence, in a time of scarcity, or upon any particular occasion, she was wont to supply him with necessary provisions.^d Broken at last with extreme age, she fell into her last sickness;^e her daughter Macrina, the eldest, and her son Peter, the youngest of her ten children, were then with her, and assisted her in her last hours. Having prayed for, and blessed her children that were absent, she took the two present, one sitting on the one side of the bed and the other on the other, by the hand, and thus delivered them up to God: "To thee, O Lord, I here devote and offer up both the first-fruits and the tenth of my children; this the first, the other the tenth and last of the fruit of my womb. Both are thine by law, both due as gifts and offerings unto thee. Let both therefore be entirely consecrated to thyself." And so having given order for her burial, that she might be interred in the sepulchre of her family, (which was done accordingly,) she died, a little before Basil's advancement to the see of Cæsarea; who bewailed her death,^f as the loss of the only comfort of his life, the news whereof put him into a relapse that had near cost his life.

II. Of the ten children which she had, four only besides Basil survive in story: Macrina, Naucratius, Gregory, and Peter. Macrina was eldest, borrowing her name from her good grandmother Macrina, sometime scholar to St. Gregory Thaumaturgus. Her mother was particularly solicitous about her education; and being a child of acute and excellent parts, besides family-affairs, she especially trained her up in the knowledge of the scriptures, and particularly of those rules which Solomon has laid down for the good government of the life. She often read the Psalter, which she committed to memory, and repeated upon all occasions; when she went to bed, or arose in the morning, or betook herself to, or left off any work, when she sat down to, or rose from meals, or went to her devotions, she always used to sing a psalm. Such was her course even before she was twelve years of age. Her piety increased with her years, and her beauty with both, which made her so much courted, that her father, to prevent importunities, provided her a suitable match, but the

^c Basil. Ep. cexxiii. s. 5.

^e Greg. Nyss. de vit. Macrin. p. 186.

^d Greg. Naz. Ep. viii. p. 733.

^f Epist. xxx.

gentleman died before the consummation ; and she, not sorry for the occasion, thenceforth resolved upon a single life, and to be assistant to her mother in educating the other children : which she performed with great care and diligence, persuading her brother Basil, then newly returned from the university, to lay aside the lofty opinion of his great learning, and to embrace the humble and difficult way of virtue, and to form himself to the strictness of a retired life. Her father being dead, and the rest of the family disposed of, she withdrew from common converse ; and together with a company of pious maids, over whom she presided as governess, spent her whole time in circles of devotion, and in the strictest exercises of piety and virtue. Her brother Nyssen (who had not seen her of eight years) undertook a journey to visit her, and in the way had some obscure intimations in his dream concerning her death, which he then knew not what to make of. Coming to the place, he found her sick, administered assistances proper to her dying circumstances, and after her decease saw her interred with great solemnity : after which he at large wrote her Life,^g worthy the perusal of the learned reader. She is said to have been infected with Origen's opinion : but finding it reported by no other than Nicephorus,^h I suppose he mistook her for her grandmother Macrina, auditor of St. Gregory, who had had Origen for his tutor.

III. Basil's next brother was Naucratius,ⁱ (or, as Constantine Porphyrogenneta calls him,^k Paneratius,) a youth of an amiable shape, strong body, and no less admirable endowments of mind. At twenty-two years of age he had given signal evidence of his eloquence and abilities in his public orations, to the great applause and admiration of the theatre ; when on a sudden he threw up all, and retired into the wilderness, settling himself in a convenient solitude near the river Iris, where he enjoyed the company of none but a few mortified old men, whom he provided for by hunting, (whereat he was dexterous,) and was ready upon all occasions to attend his mother. Five years he spent in this retirement, when going out one day to hunt, accompanied with none but his dear Chrysaphius, (whom of all his domestics he had chosen to be the constant companion of his life,) they were both brought home dead : a loss that infinitely afflicted his

^g Ext. in append. Oper. ejus Ann. 1618.

ⁱ Greg. Nyss. vit. Macrin. p. 182.

^h Lib. xi. c. 19.

^k Lib. i. them. ii.

mother, and fell heavy (though she bore it with a masculine patience) upon his sister Macrina, who loved him above all the rest. Next him was Gregory, a person of excellent learning and great eloquence, made afterwards bishop of Nyssa in Cappadocia, banished and persecuted by the Arians, who, notwithstanding all their malicious attempts against him, lived to a great age, till near the conclusion of this century, though the particular time of his death cannot be recovered.

IV. The last of the brothers, and indeed of all the children,¹ (his father dying as soon as he was born,) was Peter, who was much beholden for the advantages of his education to the care and tenderness of his sister Macrina, who seasoned his early years with religious principles, and the knowledge of divine things, and so filled up all his hours, that he had little leisure to divert to vain useless studies. She was father and master, tutor and guardian to him, whom she so improved by her prudent counsels and instructions, that he quickly arrived to the utmost perfection of true philosophy. He had parts capable of any science, especially a genius for mechanic arts, which without any help he made himself master of, beyond what others with long time and pains are wont to do. And though he attained not an equal accuracy and perfection in external literature with his brothers, yet in the improvements of virtue he was equal to them: to which end he gave up himself to a solitary and ascetic life, joining himself to the retired conversation of his mother and sister, with whom he spent a good part of his life. He was peculiarly remarkable for his hospitality and charity, and when, in a time of great famine, multitudes that had heard of his liberal temper flocked to him into the desert, he made such plentiful provisions for them, that the place seemed no longer to be a wilderness, but a populous city. Basil being promoted to the bishopric of Cæsarea, ordained him presbyter, as afterwards he was made bishop of Sebastea, (that probably that was situate in Cappadocia, or, as Stephanus, according to the division in his time, in Armenia, there being several cities of that and the like denomination, Sebaste, Sebastea, Sebastopolis, in the Eastern parts,) though when this was, or how long he sat, or how he discharged the affairs of that see, we are wholly left in the dark. Nothing of his writings remain, but one short epistle to his brother

¹ Greg. Nyss. vit. Maerin. p. 185.

Nyssen, who at his request had undertaken to answer Eunomius's book against Basil, and had desired his advice how to proceed in that affair. By this account that we have given, we see it true what Nazianzen observed in his funeral oration upon Basil,^m that however his parents were renowned for many noble virtues and honourable qualities, yet this was the greatest, the most glorious of all, that they were so happy in their children. And perhaps it is an instance hardly to be paralleled in any age, for three brothers, all men of note and eminency, to be bishops at the same time.

^m Orat. xx. p. 322.

His Works.

Genuine.

Homiliæ novem in Hexaemeron.
 In Psalmos Homiliæ 22.
 Homiliæ 31, varii argumenti.
 De baptismo Libri duo.
 De vera virginitate ad Letoium Melitens.
 Commentarii in 16 priora Isaiaë capita.
 Adversus Eunomium Libri quinque.
 Ad Amphiloichium de Spiritu Sancto.
 Sermo de Abdicatione rerum.
 De vera ac pia Fide.
 Proemium Ethicorum de judicio Dei.
 Ethica seu Moralia.
 Ascetica, seu de Institut. Monach. Sermones duo.
 Regulæ fusius disputatæ.
 Regulæ breviores.
 Constitutiones Monasticæ.
 Epistola ad Chilonem Anachoretam.

Ad Monachum lapsum, et Virgin. laps.
 Epistolæ tres.
 Ad Amphiloichium Epistolæ Canonicæ tres.
 Epistolæ aliæ 428.
 Liturgia, sed interpolata.
 Conciones Morales 24. ex Basiliï libris.
 Per Simeonem Logothetam selectæ.

Supposititious.

Homil. X^a et XI^a in Hexaemeron.
 De Grammatica exercitatione Libellus (*revera Moschopuli.*)
 De Consolatione in adversis. Lat.
 De laudibus eremi, seu vitæ solitariæ (*fragmentum ex oper. Petri Damiani.*)
 Admonitio ad filium Spiritualem. Lat.
 Precatio cum sacris operaretur.
 Fragmentum Epistolæ ad Julianum Imp.

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