

whom Hierome writeth to be the seruaunt of y^e said Apollonius, and nameth him Seuerus: but whose seruaunt iouer he was, the wretched man came some mough before the iudge, being condignely rewarded, for that his malicious diligence. For by a law which y^e Emperour made that no man vpon paine of death should falsely accuse the Chyistians, he was put to execution, & had his legs broken forthwith, by the sentence of Perennius the iudge, which being an heathen man, he pronounced against him: but the beloved martyr of God, when the iudge with much a doe had obtained of hym to tender an account before the honorable Senate of his faith, vnder whose defence and warrant of life he did the same, deliuered vnto them an eloquent Apologie of the chistian belief: but the former warrant notwithstanding, he by the decree of the Senate, was beheaded, and so ended his life: For that there was an auncient law among them decreed, that none that professed Chyist, and therefore auaiged, should be released without recantation, or altering his opinion.

This Commodus is said in stories to be so fure & fied by hande in casting the dart, that in the open Theatre before the people, he would encounter with the wild beasts, and be fure to hit them in place where he appointed. Among diuers other his vicious and wild parts he was to faere suspected in pride & arrogancy, that he would be called Hercules, and many times would he wreke his malice to the people in the skine of a Lion, to be counted thereby the king of men, like as the Lion is of the beasts.

Vpon a certaine time being his birth day, this Commodus, calling the people of Rome together, in a great theatre having his lions skine vpon him, made sacrifice to Hercules & Iupiter, causing it to be cried through the City that Hercules was the patron and defender of the City. Where were the same time at Rome, Vincentius, Eusebius, Peregrinus, Potentianus, leaue diuines, and instructors of the people, who following the steps of the Apostles, went about from place to place where the Boypell was not yet preached, concerning the benefits to the sayth of Chyist, whose hearing the madness of the Emperour & of the people, began to reigne their idolatrous blindness, teaching in villages & towines at that heard them, to beleue vpon y^e true and only God, and to come away from such worshiping of deuils, and to giue hono^r to God alone, which only is to be worshipped, willing them to repent and to be Baptised, least they perished with Commodus. With this their preaching, they converted one Iulius a Senator and other to the Religion of Chyist. The Emperour hearing thereof, caused the to be apprehended of Vitellus his Captaine, and to be compelled to sacrifice vnto Hercules, which when they stoutly refused, after diuers greuous tormentes and great miracles by them done, at last they were pressed with leaden waightes to death, Vincentius. Lib. 10. cap. 119. & Chron. Henr. de Erfordia.

This Peregrinus aboue mentioned had bene sent before by Xistus Byshop of Rome, into the partes of France, to supply there y^e rowme of a Bishop and teacher, by reason y^e the continual and horrible persecutions there aboue toged, those places were left desolat and destitute of ministers and instructors; where after he had occupied himselfe to much tene among the flocke of Chyist, and had established the congregation there, returning home againe to Rome, there finished at last (as it is said) his martyrdom.

Now remaينه likewise to speake of Iulius, which Iulius beny^e as is aforesaid, described, a Senator of Rome, and now wen by y^e preaching of these blessed men, to the sayth of Chyist, did diuines murre them & brought them home to his house, where being by them more fully instructed in chistian religion, he beleued in the gospel. And knowing for one Rufinus a Byest, was with all his family by him baptised, who (not as the common sort was wont to do) kept close and secret his faith: but intended with a marvellous and sincere zeale openly professed the same: altogether wishing and praying to be giuen to him by God, not only to beleue in Chyist, but also to haue his life for him, which thing the Emperour hearing, how that Iulius had forsake his old religion, and became a chistian, forthwith sent for him to come before him, vnto whom he spake on this wise: O Iulius, what madness hath possessed thee, that this thou dost fall from the wide & common Religion of thy forefathers who acknowledged and worshipped Iupiter & Hercules their gods, & now dost embrace a new & sond kind of Religion of the Chyistians? In which time Iulius having good occasion to shew and spee his faith gaue straight way accompt thereof to him, and affirmed that Hercules & Iupiter were false Gods, & how the worshippers of the should perishe with eternal damnation & punishmentes, which the Emperour hearing, how that he condemned & despised

his Gods, being then inflamed with a great wrath as he was by nature very cholericke, committed him forthwith to Vitellus, the master of the souldiours, a very cruell & fierce man, to see Iulius either to sacrifice to mighty Hercules, or retaining the same to flie him. Vitellus as hec was commaunded) exhorted Iulius to obey the Emperours commaundement and to worship his Gods, Alledging how that the whole Empire of Rome was not onely constituted, but also preserved and maintained by them, which Iulius denied utterly to do, admonishing sharply in like manner Vitellus to acknowledge the true God, and obey bys commaundementes, least he with his master should dye some greuous death, whereat Vitellus being moued, caused Iulius with cougels to be beaten vnto death.

These things being thus briefly recited touching such holy martyrs, as hetherto haue suffered, nowe remaينه that wee retorne againe to the order of the Romaine Byshops such as followed next after Alexander, at whome we last whose succeder next was Xistus or Sixtus, the first Byshopp counted after Peter, and governed that ministerye the space of 7 yeares as Damasus & other do write. Vespergenis maketh mention but of ix. yeares. Platina recordeth that he died a Martyr, and was buried at Maricane. But Eusebius speaking of his decease, maketh no word mentio of any Martyrdom. In the 2. tome of the Councelles certaine Epistles be attributed to him, whereof Eusebius, Damasus, Hierome, and other olde authoys, as they makeno relation, do seeme they to haue no intelligence nor knowledge of any such matter. In these counterite epistles, & in Platina appeareth y^e Xistus was the first author of these ordinaunces. First that the holy miseries and holy vessels should be touched, but onely of persons holy and consecrated, especially of no woman, 3rd that the coppos (cloth) should be made of no other cloth, but of fine linnen. Item that bishops such as were called vp to the Apostolicke sea, returning home againe, should not be received at their returne, vnlesse they brought with them letters from the bishop of Rome, saluting the people. 4th at the celebration he ordained to be long this versic, Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Where mozeouer is to be noted, that the said Platina, in the life of thys Xistus, doeth testifie that Peter ministred the celebration of the communion onlie with the Lordes prayer. These tryssing ordinaunces of Xistus, who is so rude that seeth not, or may not eadly conceiue to be falsly fathered of Xistus, or of anye father of that time; first by the vnsoyne rudenes and stile of all those decretall letters, nothing sauouryng of that age, but rather of y^e later duncticall times that followed; 2nd by the matter and argument in those letters contained, nothing agreyng with the state of those troublidome daies. Neither a game is it to be supposed that any such recorde of bishops was then to the Apostolicall sea of Rome, that it was not lawfull to retorne without their letters: when as the persecution against the Chyistians was then so boate, in the daies of Hadrian that the Bishoppes of Rome themselves were moze glad to flee out of the Citie, than other bishops were to come to them vnto Rome. And if Xistus added the Sanctus vnto the Masse canon, what pece then of the canon went before it, when they which put to the other partes came after Xistus? And if they came after Xistus that added the rest, why did they set their peeces before his? seeing they began the first pece of the canon, came after him?

The same likewise is to be iudged of the Epistles & ordinaunces of Telesphorus, who succeeded next vnto Xistus, and being Bishop of that congregation the terme of a ii. yeares, the first yeare of the raigne of Antoninus Pius, dyed a Martyr, about the yeare of our Lorde, 138. His Epistle like vnto the rest containing in it no great matter of doctrine, hath these ordinaunces: first he commaundeth al that were of the Clergy to fast and abstaine from fleshy eating, vii. weekes before Easter. What thye Masses should be said vpon the Nativity day of the Lord. What no lay man should accuse either bishop or priest. He ordained mozeouer Gloria in excelsis, to be added to the Masse, &c. but these things falsely to be faimed vpon him may easily be conceitured. For as touching the vii. weekes fast neither doth it agree with the old Romaine terme commonly receaued, calling it Quadragesima, that is the xl. daies fast: neither with the example of our Saviour, who fasted not seven weekes but onely xl. dayes. Mozeouer, as concernyng this xl. daies fast, wee reade of the same in the Epistle of Ignacius, which was long before Telesphorus: whereby it may appeere that this Telesphorus was not the first inuentour thereof. And if it be true, that is lately come out in the name of Abdias (but vntuly, as by many coniectures may be proued) there is read, that in the daies of S. Basethewe this Lent, fast of xl. dayes was obserued long before Telesphorus: by these

Appollonius accused by hys owne seruaunt.

Appollonius exhibiteth an Apology of hys sayth to the Senate.

An old wicked Law of the Romaines.

The ridiculous Pride of the Emperour.

Vincentius, Eusebius, Peregrinus, Potentianus, Martyrs.

Iulius a Senator converted to Chyist. Ex Vincen. lib. 10. cap. 119. Henr. de Erford.

Peregrinus sent to France and Martyred at Rome. Ex Chistiana Vila Stati.

Iulius with hys family baptised and after Martyred.

Xistus Byshop of Rome.

The trifling ordinaunces of Xistus.

S Peter celebrated the Lordes supper onely with the Lordes prayer Platina in Vila Stati.

The ordinaunce of Xistus suspected.

Telesphorus Byshop of Rome and Martyr.

The ordinaunces of Telesphorus.

Lent fast and the originall thereof examined.