

The story of the deli-
rance of
Dionysius
and his fel-
lowes.

journey, whether he was purposed to go, which was to a marriage, the manner of which marriages then was to sit up all the night long feasting and drinking. Thus as he was come, sitting with them at the feast, he telleth his companions what was done, & what he heard by the way. This was no longer told, but all they forthwith upon a heab, as stroken with a sodain fury rushing out together, made toward vs as fast as they could, with such crying & noise, as might seeme very terrible. At the first hearing wherof, the souldiours that had vs in keeping, being afraid, ran away, by reason wherof we were left alone, & found as we were lying upon fourmes & benches. Then, (the Lord knoweth) thinking with my selfe that they had bene thieves, which came to spoyle and rob, being in my couch, lay still in my shirt onely as I was, the rest of my garments lying by me. I offered to them. They then willed me in all hast to rise and get away, whereby I then perceiving the cause of their coming, cryed vnto them desiring that they would suffer vs so to do: And if they would do any benefit for me for so much as I could not escape the hands of the which would pursue me and carry me away, I prayed them that they would prevent them, and cut off my head before. And as I was crying thus vnto them, casting my selfe growling upon the pavement as my companions can testify, who were partakers of all these thinges, they burst forth violently, taking me by the handes and feete, and carried me out of the dores, and led me away. There followed me Gaius, Faulstus, Petrus, Paulus, (who were witnesses of all the same) which brought me also out of the Citie, and so setting me vpon a bare Asse, conveyed me away. Thus much writeth Dionysius of himselfe, the example of whole Epistle is cited in the Ecclesiasticall story of Eusebius, Lib. 6. cap. 40. also Lib. 7. cap. 11.

Dionysius.
Gaius.
Faulstus,
Petrus.
Paulus deli-
uiered fro
the Centu-
rion and the
souldiours.
Ex Euseb.
lib. 6. ca. 40.
Lib. 7.
cap. 11.
Ex Niceph.
Lib 5. cap.
27.
Christopho-
rus Martyr.
The fable
of great
S Christo-
pher.

Nicephorus in his fifth booke, cap. 27. maketh mention of one named Christophorus, which also suffered in this persecucion of Decius. Of which Christophorus, whether the fable riseth of that mighty Giant set vp in Churches, wading through the Seas, with Christ on his shoulder, and a tree in his hand for a walking staffe, &c. it is vncertaine. Georg. Vicelius alledgeth out of Ruggerus Fuldens and mentioneth of one Christophorus, borne of the nation of the Cananites, which suffered vnder Decius, being, as he sayeth of xii. cubites hie. But the rest of the history paynted in Churches, the sayd Vicelius he detideth as fables of Centaurus, or other poeticall fictions.

Bergomensis in hys viii. booke maketh relation of diuers martyrs vnder Decius, as Meniatius which suffered at Florence, of Agatha an holy virgine of Sicile, who is sayd to suffer diuers and bitter tormentes vnder Quintinianus the Proconsul, with prisonment, with beatings, with famine, with racking, roled also vpon sharpe shelles and hot coles, hauing moreouer her brestes cut from her body, as Bergomensis, and the Martyrolog of Ado recorde. In the whiche Authoys as I denye not, but part of the story may be true, so agayne concerning the myracles of the aged man appearing to her, and of the pong man clothed in a silken vesture, with an hundredth pong me after him, and of the double table with the inscription, Mentem san-

Meniatius,
Agatha.
Martyrs.
Ex Bergo-
mens. Lib. 8.
Er Marty-
rologio
Adonis.

It had it is to recte all that suffered in this persecution, whē as whole multitudes went into wilderness & mountains, wandring without succour or comfort, some starued with hunger and cold, some with sickness consumed, some deuoured of beastes, some with barbarous thecues taken and carried away. Vincentius in his xi. booke speaking of Asclepiades, writeth also of el. virgins and Martyrs, which by sundry kindes of tormentes were put to death about the same tyme, in the persecution of this tyrant.

Martyrs
wandering
in moun-
taynes.
Fourty Vir-
gines Mar-
tyrs.
Tryphon
Martyr.

Likewise in the said Vincentius, mentio is made of Tryphon, a man of great holines, and constant in his suffering, who being brought to the Citie of Nice, before the President Aquilus, for his constant confession of Christes name was afflicted with diuers and grievous tormentes, and at length with the sword put to death.

Maximi-
anus.
Malchus,
Martimianus.
Dionysius.
Ioannes.
Serapion.
Constantinus.
Martyrs.

At what tyme Decius had erected a temple in the midst of the Citie of Ephesus, compelling all that were in the Citie there to sacrifice to the Idoles, seuen Christians were found, whose names were Maximianus, Malchus, Martianus, Dionysius, Ioannes, Serapion, and Constantinus, who refusing the Idolatrous worship, were accused for the same vnto the Emperour to be Christians, which when they constantly professed, and did not deny, notwithstanding, because they were souldiours, retaining to the Emperours service, respit was geuen them for a certaine space to deliberate with themselves, til the returne agayne of the Emperour, which then was going to warre. In the meane space, the Emperour being departed, they taking counsaile

together, went and hidde themselves in secret caues of the Mount Calius. The Emperour returnyng agayne, after great inquisition made for them, hearing where they were, caused the mouth of the place where they were, to be closed wth wythe beapes of stones, that they not able to get out, should be famished with in. And thus were those good men martyred. The story (if it be true) goeth further that they betwene feare and sorow fell a sleepe, in which sleepe they continued the space of certaine ages after, till the tyme of Theodosius the Emperour, before they did awake, as reporteth Vincentius, Nicephorus, Lib. 5. ca. 27. and partly also Henr. Erfordiens. But of their awaking, that I referre to them that list beleue it. Certain it is, that at the last day they shall awake in deede without any fable.

Hieronymus in the life of Paulus the Hermitte, reciteth a story of a certaine souldiour, whom the Pretor could not ouerthrew with tormentes remove fro his Chistianitie, he deuised an other way, which was this: he commaunded the souldiour to be layd vpon a soft bed in a pleasant garden among the flourishing Lilies and red Roses, which done, all other being removed away, & himselfe there left alone, a beautiful harlot came to him, who embracing him, & with al other intisements of an harlot, laboured to prouoke him to her naughtines. But the good souldiour tearing his nose, then obeying selfe, bite of his tong with hys own teeth, and spit it in the face of the harlot, as she was kissing him, and so got he the victorie, by the constant grace of the Lord assisting him.

The fable of the
awaking of
the seuen
martyrs.
Ex Vincent.
Nicepho.
Erfordiens.

A souldiour
martyr.
Ex Hierony. in
vita Pauli
Eremita.
A notable ex-
ample of a chaste
souldiour by-
tying of hys
tong, and spit-
ting it in the
face of an har-
lot.

An other like example of singular chasticke is writtten of the virgin Theodora, and an other souldiour, by Ambrose do sacrifice to the Idols, this Theodora refusing to y^e sewes, which notwithstanding by the singular providence of god was well deliuered. For as there was a great company of wanton yong men ready at the doore to peake into the house where she was, one of the brethren, named Didimus (as Ado sayeth) moued with sayth and mistis of God, putting on a souldiours habite, made himselfe one of the first that came in, who rounding her in the care, tolde her the cause and purpose of his coming, being a christia as she was: his countaile was that she should put on souldiours habite, and so slip away. And he putting on her garments would there remaine to abide their force. And so did, whereby the virgine escaped vnknewen. Didimus left vnto the rage and wondring of the people being a man in stead of a woman, was presented vnto the President, vnto whom without delay he vttered all the whole matter as it was done, professing him so as he was, to be a christia, and therupon was condemned to suffer. Theodora vnderstandyng thereof, and thinking to excuse him by accusing herselfe, offered her selfe as the partie guilty, vnto the Judge, claying and requiring the condemnation to light vpon her, the other as innocent to be discharged. But the cruell Judge (crueller then Dionysius, which spared Damon & Pithias) neither considering the vertue of the persons, nor the innocency of the cause, vniustly and inhumane proceeded in execution agaynst the both, who first hauing their heads cut off, after were cast in the fire, Ambros. Ado. Although what tyme, or in what persecution these did suffer, in the authoys of this narration it doth not appeare.

A like example
of chasticke be-
twene two
Christians.
Ex Ambros. lib. 2.
de Virgim.

Theodora,
Didimus,
Martyrs.

Agathon a man of armes in the Citie of Alexandria, for rebuking certaine lewd persons, cruelly detidng the dead bodies of the Christians, was cried out off and rayled on of the people. Afterward accused to the iudge, was condemned to lose his head, Erfordiensis

Agathon,
Martyr.

The sayd Erfordiensis also maketh mention of Paulus, and Andreas, whome the Proconsul of Troada gaue to the people being scourged, and after drawne out of the Citie, they were troden to death with the feete of the people. Henr. de Erford.

Paulus,
Andreas,
Martyrs.

Among other that suffered vnder this wicked Decius, Bergomensis also maketh mention of one Iustinus a Priest of Rome, and of an other Nicofratus a Deacon. To these Vincentius also addeth Portius a Priest of Rome, whom he reporteth to be the conuerter of Phillip the Emperour afore mentioned.

Iustinus,
Nicofratus,
Portius Mar-
tyrs.

Of Abdon and Sennas we read also in the foresayd Bergomensis and Vincentius, two noble men, who because they had buried the christians, whom Decius had brought from Babylon to Corduba, and there put them to death, were therefore accused to Decius, & brought to Rome, where they being commaunded to sacrifice to dead Idols, would not obey, and for the same were geuen to the wilde beastes to be deuoured: but when the wilde beastes more gentle then the men would not touch them, they were at length with the sword beheaded. Bergom. Vincent. Lib. 11. cap. 4. It best to me it seemeth not vnpollice nor vnlike, this Abdon and

Abdon,
Sennas. Martyrs.