

Sennas, to be the same, whome in other stoyes we finde, and before haue mentioned to be Ammon and Zenon.

One Secundianus was accused to Valerian a Captayne of Decius, to be a Christian, which protestid when he stoutly did maynteyne, was commaunded to prison. By the way as the souldiours were leading him to the galle, Verianus and Marcellianus seeing the matter, cried to the souldiours, asking them whether they drew the innocent. At the which worde, when they also confessed them selues to be Christians, they were likewise apprehended, and brought to a Citie named Centumcellas: where being willed to sacrifice, they did spit vpon the Idols, and so after sentence and iudgement given, first they were beaten with wasters or truncheons, after that were hanged and tormented vpon the gibbet, hauing fire set to their sides. Vincentius addeth moreouer that the tormentors some of them saile sodainly dead, other some being taken w wicked spirites, the Martyrs in sword at length were beheaded. Vinc. Lib. 11. cap. 51.

To prosecute in length of history, the liues and sufferings of all them, which in this terrible persecution, were Martyred, it were too long, & almost infinite: brieely therefore to rehearse the names of such as we finde alledged out of a certaine brieft treatise of Bede intituled De temporibus. Under Decius suffered Hyppollitus and Concordia, Hiereneus and Abaudus, Victoria a Virgine, being noble personages of Antioche. Bellias Byshoppe of the Citie of Apollonia. Leacus, Tyrsus, and Gallineta, Nazanzo, Tryphon in the Citie of Egypt called Tanais. Phileas Byshop, Philocomus with many other in Ierde. Phileronius byshop of Babylon. Theosphon Byshop of Pamphilia. Nestor Byshop in Corduba. Parmenius Byest with diuers moe. In the Province called Colonia, Circensis, Marianus and Iacobus. In Africa, Nemesianus, Felix, Rogatianus priest. Felicissimus. At Rome Iouinus, Basileus, also Rufina, and Secunda Virgines, Tertullianus, Valerianus, Nemesius, Sempronianus, and Olympius. In Spayne Teragone, at Verona Zeno Byshop. At Caesarea, Marinus, and Archemius. In the towne of Miliane Priuatus Byshop, Theodorus surnamed Gregorius Byshop of Pontus. Hac Beda.

Vincentius in his vi. booke, maketh also mention, citing Ex Hugone, of certaine children suffering Martyrdome vnder the same persecution, in a Citie of Tuscia called Aretium: whose names I finde not, except they be Pergentius & Laurentius mentioned in Equilinus. Lib. 7. cap. 80.

Howe that I haue recorded of them sufficiently, which vnder this tempest of Decius, constantly gaue their liues to Martyrdome for the testimonie of Christ: it remaineth, that a fewe wordes also be spoken of such that for feare or frailtie in this persecution did shrinke backe, & slide from the truth of their confession. In the number of whom first cometh in the remembrance of Serapion an aged olde man. Of whom writeth Dionysius Alexandrinus, vnto Fabius, declaring: that this Serapion was an olde man, which liued amongst them a sincere and vpyght life of long time, but at length fell. This Serapion oft and many times desired to be receaued againe, but no man listened to him, for hee had sacrificed before. After this not long after he fell into sickness where he remained three dayes dombe, and benumbed of all his senses. The fourth day following, beginning a litle to recouer, he called to him his sisters soune, & saide: how long, how long (my soune) do ye hold me here? Make hast I pray you, that I were absolued. Call herther some of the ministers to me, and so saying no more, held his peace, as dombe & speechles. The boy taine, it was then night, vnto the minister, who at the same time being sicke, could not come with the messenger, but sayde: for so much as he willed heretofore (as he sayde) that such as lay a dying, if they couet to be receaued & reconciled, and especially if they required it earnestly, should be admitted, whereby with the better hope & confidence they may depart hence: therefore he gaue to the boy a litle of the Eucharist, willing him to crumble it into the cup, & so to drop it into the mouth of the olde man. With this the boy returned, bringing to him the holy Eucharist. As he was now nere at hand, before he had entred in, Serapion the olde mā, speaking againe, comest thou (sayd he) my soune? The Byest, quoth the messenger, is sicke & can not come, but do, as he willeth you, & let me go. And the boy immixed the Eucharist, & drop it in softly into the mouth of the olde mā. Who after he had tasted a litle, immediately gaue vp the Ghost. Hac Dionysius Euf.

In the Citie of Troade, as the Proconuil was greedously tormenting one Nicomachus, he cried out, that he was no Christian, and so was let downe againe. And when after he had sacrificed, he was taken esloones with a wicked spirite, and so throwen downe vpon the ground, where he byring of his toung with his teeth, so departed.

Henr. de Erfordia.

Dionysius in his Epistles also writyng to Fabius, and lamentyng the great terrour of this persecution declarcth, how that many worthy and notable Christians, for feare and horroz of the great tiranny therof, did theyr themselues feeble and weak men. Of whom some for dread, some of their owne accord, other after great tormentes suffered, yet after reuolued from the constancy of their profession. Also S. Cyprian in his treatise De lapsis, reciteth with great sorrow, and testificth, how that a great number at the first thyratnyng of the aduersary, neither beyng compelled nor thron downe with any violence of the enemy, but of their voluntary weakenes fell downe themselves. Neither (sayth he) taryng while the iudge should put incense in their hands, but before any stroke stroken in the field, turned their backs, & played the cowards, not only comyng to their sacrifices, but preyetyng the same, and pretending to come without compulsion, bynging moreouer theyr infants & children eyther put into their hands, or taking them with them of their owne accord, and exhortyng moreouer other to do the lyke after their example.

Of this weaknesse and falling, the said author sheweth two causes, either loue of their goodes and patrimonie, or feare of tormentes. And addeth moreouer examples of the punishmentes of them which so reuolued: affirmyng that many of them were taken and beved with wicked spirites. And of one man among other which after his voluntary default, sodainly was stroken dombe. Agayn, an other after his abituration as he should communicate with other, in stead of bread receiued ashes in his hand. The of a certayn mayden, who beyng taken & beved with a spirite, did teare her owne toung with her teeth, and tormented with paine in her bellie and inward partes so deceased.

Among other of this sort, S. Cyprian, Lib. 2. cap. 8. maketh also mention of one Euaristus a Bishop in Africa, who leauing his charge, and making a shipwacke of his faith, went wandering about in other countreys, forsakynge his owne flocke. In like maner he maketh also mention of Nicoftratus a Deacon, who forsakynge his Deaconship, and takynge the goods of the Church with him, fled away into other countreys, &c. Albeit Bergomenis geueth that this Nicoftratus the Deacon afterwaro dyed a Martyr. Thus then although some did relent, yet a very great nuber saith he, there was, whom neither feare could remoue, nor paine could ouerthrow to cause them to betray their confession, but that they stode like glorious Martyrs vnto the ende, Cyprian.

The same Cyprianus also in an other booke De mortalitate, reciteth a notable story of one of his owne Colleges, and fellow Priest: who beyng oppressed with weaknesse, and greatly afrayd with death drawynge at hand, desired leaue to depart, and to be discharged. As he was thus entreating, and almost now dying, there appeared by him a yong man, of an honorable and of reuerend maistie, of a tall stature, and comely behauior, so bryght & cleare to behold, that scarce mans carnall eyes was able to beare the beholding of him, but that he was able so to do, which was now redy to depart this world. To whom this yong man speaking with a certaine indignation of mynd and voyce, thus said: Pati timeris, exire non vultis, quid faciam vobis? To suffer ye dare not, to goe out ye will not, what would ye me to do vnto you?

Upon the occasion of these and such other, which were a great number, that fell and did renounce, as is aforesaid, in this persecution of Decius, rose vp first the quarell & heretic of Nouatus, who in these dayes made a great disturbance in the church, holding this opinion, that they which once renounced the faith, and for feare of tormentes had offered incense to the Idols, although they repented therefore, yet could not afterward be reconciled, nor admitted to the Church of Christ. This Nouatus beyng first Priest vnder Cyprian at Carthage, afterward by stirring vp discord and factions, began to disturbe the Bishopricke of Cyprian, to appoint there a Deacon called Felicissimus, agaynst the Bishops mynd or knowledge, also to allure and separate certayne of the byschep from the Bishop, all which Cyprian, Lib. 2. Epist. 8. doth well declare. After this the sayd Nouatus goyng to Rome, kept there the like stirre with Cornelius (as the same Cornelius in Eusebius, Lib. 6. cap. 43. doth testific) settyng himselfe vp as Bishop of Rome against Cornelius, which was the lawfull Bishop of Rome before. The which to bying to passe, he vled this practise: first he had allured to him to be his adherents, the of foure of god men and holy confessor, which had suffered before great tormentes for their confession, whose names were Maximus, Vrbanus, Sydonius, and Celerinus. After this he entred thre simple bishops about the coastes of Italy to repayre to

A terrible example of denying, shewed vpon

Nicomachus. Dionysius ad Fabium, Cyprianus Serm. de lapsis.

The weakness of christians denying their faith.

Examples of God hys punishment after denial. The sacrament called bread of S. Cyprian. De lapsis.

Cyprianus Lib. de mortalitate. A notable voyce of God to a Priest of Carthage.

The occasion and rising vp of Nouatus heretic.

Cornelius Epist. ad Fabium, ex Euse lib. 6. cap. 43.

Secundianus. Verianus. Marcellianus. Martyrs.

Ex Vincent. lib. 11. cap. 51.

Ex libro, Beda, de Temporibus, citante Henrico de Erfordia. A brieft Cataloge of diuers which suffered vnder Decius ex Beda.

Children Martyrs. Ex Vincent lib. 11. cap. 52.

Such as reuolued and fell in this persecution.

Serapion.

Ex Euseb. Lib. 6. cap. 44.

*Note here the Sacrament to be called the Eucharist, and not the body of Christ. The holy Eucharist in time of great neede and distresse committed to a boy. The repentance and reconciliation of Serapion. The goodnes of God shewed to Serapion. Ex Henr. de Erfordia.