

Ex Dionysio ci-
tante
Euseb. Lib. 7.
cap. 10. & Na-
cypbo. Lib. 6.
cap. 10.

Wicked counsell
What cuill it
doth.

of the which openly professed Christ, that shewed himselfe
so louing and familiar toward the Christians as he did: in
so much that (as Dionysius, writing to Herman doth testifye)
all hys whole court was replenished wth holy Santes &
seruantes of Christ, and godly persons, so that his house
might seeme to be made a Church of God. But by the ma-
lice of Sathan, through wicked counsell the quiet dayes
endured not very long. For in proesse of tyme this Vale-
rianus being charmed or incensed by a certayne Egyptian,
a chiefe ruler of the Heathen Synagoge of the Egyptians,
a mayster of the Charmers or inchaunters, who in deede
was troubled, for that he could not do his Magicall feates
for the Christians, was so farre infatuated and bewitched,
that through the detestable pronocations of that deuillish
Egyptian, he was wholly turned vnto abhominable I-
dols, and to execrable impietie, in sacrificing young infants
and quartering bodies, and deciding the cruelties of childre
new-borne, and so proceeding in his fury, moued the eight
persecution, agaynst the Christians, whom the wicked E-
gyptian could not abide, as being the hinderers and de-
stroyers of hys Magicall enchauntinges, about the yeare
of our Lord, 259.

The eight Persecution.

The eight per-
secution.

ANNO. }
259. }

The chiefe exc-
cutours of this
persecution.
The speciall
causes of this
persecution.

In the which persecution the chiefe administrators and exe-
cutours were Emilianus President of Egypt, Paternus
and Galerius Maximus, Proconsuls in Aphyca, Bergomen-
sis also maketh mention of Paternus, Vicegerent of Rome,
and of Perennius, Vincentius spakeeth also of Nicerius, and
Claudius Presidents, &c.

What was the chiefe originall cause of this persecution,
partly is signified before, where mention was made of the
wicked Egyptian. But as this was the outward and po-
liticall cause, so S. Cyprian in his seventh booke. Epist. 4. whose
wordes be these: but we (sayth he) must vnderstand and
conside, that thys turbulent oppression & calamitie, which
hath wasted for the most part all our whole company, and
doth daily consume, vnto chiefe of our owne wickednes
& finnes: while we walke not in the way of the Lord, nor
obserue his preceptes left vnto vs for our institution. The
Lord obserued the will of his father in all poynts: but we obserue
not the will of the Lord, hauing all our minde and study set vpon
lucre & possessions, geuen to pryde, full of emulation and dissen-
tion, voyde of simplicitie and faythfull dealing, renouncing thys
world in word onely, but nothing in deede, euery man pleasing
himselfe, and displeasing all other. And therefore are we thus
scourged, and worthily. For what stripes and scourges doe wee
not deserue, when the confessors themselues (such as haue byd
the tryall of their confession) and such as ought to be an example
to the rest of well doying, doe keepe no discipline. And therefore
because some such there be, proudly puffed vp with this swelling
and vnmanly bragging of their confession, these tormentes
come: such as doe not easily send vs to the crowne, except by
the mercy of God, some being také away by quicknes of death,
do preuent the tediousnes of punishment. These things do we suffer
for our finnes and desertes, as by the Lodes censure we haue
bene forewarned, saying: If they shall forsake my lawe, and will
not walke in my iudgements: If they shall prophane my institu-
tions, and will not obserue my preceptes, I will visite their in-
iquities with the rod, and their transgressions with scourges.
These rods and scourges (sayth he) we feele, which neyther please
God in our good deedes, nor repent in our euill deedes. Where-
fore the sayd Cyprian, adding this exhortation with all, exhorted
them to pray, and intreate from the bottome of their hart and
whole minde, the mercy of God which promifeth, saying: but yet
my mercy I will not scatter from them. &c. Let vs aske, and wee
shall obayne, and though (sayth Cyprian) it be with tariance,
yet for so much as we haue greuously offended, let vs continue
knocking, for to him that knocketh, it shall be opened, if our pray-
ers, sighinges, and weepinges knocke still at the dore with con-
tinuance, and if our prayers be ioyned together with brotherly a-
greement &c.

Moreover, what vices were then principally rayning a-
mong the Christians, hee further specifeth in the sayd Epistle:
which chiefly were deuision and dissenion among the brethren.
For when it was spoken to them in a vision, by these wordes Pe-
trus & impetrabit, that is: Pray, and ye shall obayne, afterward
it was required of the congregation there present, to direct their
prayers, for certayne persons assigned to them by name: but they
could not agree and cōdescend altogether of the names and per-
sons of them which they should pray for, but were dissonant in
their content and petition: whiche thing (sayth Cyprian) did
greatly displease hym, that spake vnto them: Pray, and ye shall ob-
tayne, for that there was no vniforme equalitie of voyce and hart
nor one simple and ioyned concord among the brethren, whereof

Discord and
deuision among
the brethren.

it is written the Psalme, 67. God which maketh to dwell in the
house together men of one accord. &c. And so by the occasion
hereof, he writeth vnto them in the foresayd Epistle, and moueth
them to prayer and mutuall agreement. For (sayth he) if it be pro-
mised in the Gospell, to be graunted whatsoeuer any two consen-
ting together shall aske, what shall then the whole Church do a-
greeing together, or what if this vnanimite were among the
whole fraternitie, which vnanimite (sayeth Cyprian) if it
had bene then among the brethren, non sensissent fratribus hac
male, si vnnum fratemitas fuisset animata, that is: these euiles
had not happened to the brethren, if the brethren had ioyned to-
gether in brotherly vnanimite, &c.

Psal. 67.

After the causes thus declared of this, or other perfec-
tions, the sayd S. Cyprian moreover in the foresayd Epistle
(worthy to be read of al men) describeth likewise a cer-
taine vision, wherein was shewed vnto them by the Lord,
before the persecution came, what should happen. The vision
was this: There was a certayne aged father sitting, at whose right
hand set a young man very sad and pensiu: as one with an indig-
nation sorrowfull, holding hys hand vpon hys brest, hys counte-
nance heauy and vnchearefull. On the left hand sat another
person, hauing in hys hand a net, whiche he threatened to lay to
catch the people that stode about. And as he was maruelling that
saw the sight thereof, it was sayd vnto him: The young man who
thou seest sit on the right hand, is sad and sorry, that hys preceptes
be not obserued. But he on the left hand daunceth and is merry,
for that occasion is geuen him to haue power of the aged Father
geuen him to afflict men. And this vision was seene long before
this tempest of persecution happened; wherein is declared the
same that before is sayd, the finnes of the people to be the cause,
why Sathan in this persecution and all other, hath had and hath
still such power with hys net of destruction, to rage agaynst the
bloud of Christen men, and all because (sayth Cyprian) we for-
slacke our praying, or be not so vigilant therein as wee should be:
wherefore the Lord because he loueth vs, correcteth vs, correc-
teth vs, to amend vs, amendeth vs to saue vs. &c. Cyprian.

A vision
forethrew-
ing perfec-
tion to come.
Cyprian.
Lib. 4.
Epist. 4.

Our finnes
goue Sathā
power a-
gaynst vs.

Furthermore, the same Cyprian, and in the same Epistle,
writing of his own reuelation or message sent to him,
thus sayth: And to hys least seruant both unskill and un-
worthy (meaning by himselfe) God of his tender goodnes
hath vouchsafed to direct this word. Tell him sayth he
that hee be quiet and of good comfort, for peace will come.
Albeit a little stay there is for a while, for that some remain
yet to be proued and tryed, &c. And sheweth also in y^e same
place of another reuelation of his, wherein he was admo-
nished to be spare in hys feeding, and sober in hys drinke,
least hys minde geuen to beautifull meditation might be
caried away with worldly allurements, or oppressed with
to much surfeit of meates and drinkes, should be lesse apt or
able to prayer and spirituall exercise.

An other
reuelation
shewed to
S. Cyprian.

Spare dyet
and sober
drinke con-
uenient in
Christian
bishops.

Finally in the latter end of the foresayd Epistle, men-
tion also followeth of other reuelations or shewinges,
wherein the Lord (sayth Cyprian) doth vouchsafe in many of
hys seruantes to foreshew to come the restauring of hys Church,
the stable quiet of our health and safeguard, after rayne fayre wea-
ther, after darcknes light, after stormy tempest, peaceable calme,
the fatherly helpe of his loue, the wont & old glory of hys diuine
maiesty whereby both the blasphemy of the persecutors shall be
repressed, and the repentance of such as haue fallen be reformed,
and the strong and stable confidence of them that stand, shall re-
ioyce and glory. Thus much hath S. Cyprian, writing of these
things to the Clergy. Lib. 4. Epist. 4.

The peace
of the
Church to
come, fore-
shewed by
the Lord.

As touching now the crimes and accusations in this
persecution layd to the charge of the Christians, thys was
the principall, first because they refused to doe worship to
their Idols and to the Emperours: then for that they pro-
fessed the name of Christ. Besides all the calamities and
euils that happened in the world, as warres, famine, and
pestilence, were onely imputed to the Christians. Agaynst
all which quarrelling accusations Cyprian doth eloquently
defend the Christians in his booke Contra Demetrianum:
Like as Tertulian had done before, writing Contra Scapulam
page. 55. And first touching the obiection for not worshipping
Idoles, he cleareth the Christians both in his booke Contra De-
meir. & also De Vanitate idoli. prouing those Idols to be no true
Gods, but Images of certayne dead kinges, which neyther could
saue themselues from death, nor such as worship them. The true
God to be but one, and that by the testimony of Sothenes, Plato,
and Trifinegillus, the which God the Christians doe truly wor-
ship. And as concerning that the Christians were thought to be
causes of publique calamities, because they worshipped not the
Gentiles Idoles, he purgeth the Christians thereof, prouing that
if there be any defect in increase of things, it is not to be ascribed
to them, but rather to the decrease of nature, languishing toward
her age and latter end. Agayne for that it hath bene so sayd
and prophced; that toward the end of the world should
come warres, famine, and pestilence. Moreover if there be any
cause

Crimes and
causes fall-
ly layd to
the Chris-
tians.

The Apo-
logy of
Cyprian for
the Christians
Cyprian con-
tra Democ-
trianum.
Cyprian de
idolatriam
vanitate.