

them, they were made much of. Albeit all this purpose of the aduersary, did nothing puenayle against the hoyle and constant seruants of Christ. Notwithstanding, of the weak fort innumerable there were, which for feare & infirmity fell and gaue ouer, euen at the first bunt.

At the first comming downe of these edictes into Nicomedia, there chanced a dede to be done, much worthy of memory, of a Christian, being a noble man borne, whiche moued by the zeale of God, after the proclamation made at Nicomedia was set vp, by and by raime and tooke downe the same, and openly raze and rent it in peeces, not fearing the presence of the two Emperours, then being in the cite. For which acte he was put to a most bitter death, whiche death he with great faith & constancie endured euen to the last gaspe. Euseb. lib. 8. lib. 3. & c. 5.

After this the furious rage of the malignaunt Emperours, being let loose against the saintes of Christ proceeded more & more, making hauock of gods people through out all quarters of the worlde. First Dioclesian which had purposed with himselfe to subuert the whole christian religion, executed his tyranny in the east, and Maximianus in the west. But wily Dioclesian began very subtilly; for hee put the matter first in practice in his owne campe, among whom the marshall of the field, as Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 4. affirmeth, put the Christian Soldiers to this choise, whether they would obey the Emperours commaundement in that maner of sacrifice he commaunded, and so both to keepe their offices, and leade their bands, or els to lay away from the their armour and weapons. Whereunto the Christian men courageously answered, that they were not only ready to lay away their armour & weapons, but also to suffer death if it should with shame be enforced vnto them, rather than they would obey the wicked decrees and commaundements of the Emperour.

There might a man haue scene very manye whiche were delirous to liue a simple and poore life: and whiche regarded no estimation and honour in comparison of true piety & godlines. And this was no more but a subtil and wily flattery in the beginning, to offer them to be at their owne liberty, whether they would willingly abiure their profession or not; as also this was an other, that in the beginning of the periecutiō, there were but a few tormented with punishment, but afterwarde by little and little hee began more manifestly to braide out into persecution: It can hardly be expressed with wordes what number of Martyrs, and what blood was shedde through all cities and regions for the name of Christ. Eusebius, in his 8 booke & chap. 7. saith that he himselfe knew the worthy Martyrs that were in Palestine. But in the of Idenicia he declarerth in the same a marvellous martyrdome made, where certayne christians beinge geuen to most cruell wild beastes were preferred without hurt of them, to the great admiration of the beholders and those Lions, Beares, and Lybards (kept hungry for that purpose) had no desire to deuoure them, which notwithstanding most vehemently raged against those by whome they were brought into the stage, and stood as they thought without daunger of the, such were first deuoured. But the Christian Martyrs because they could not be hurt of the beastes beinge slayne with the sword, were afterwarde throwen into the sea. At that time was martyred the Bishop of Sydon. But Sylluanus the Bishop of Bazensis with 39. other were slayne in the mettrall mynes of Idenicia. Pamphilus the elder of Cesarea beinge the glory of that congregation, died a most worthy Martyr, whose both life and most commendable martyrdome, Eusebius oftentimes declarerth in his 8. booke and 13. chapter, in so much that he hath written the same in a booke by it selfe. In Syria all the chiefe teachers of the congregation were first committed to prison, as a most heauy & cruell spectacle to behold, as also the bishops, Elders, and Deacons, which all were esteemed as menquellers, and perpetratours of most wicked facts. Eusebius. lib. 8. cap. 6. After that we read of an other, whose name was Nannion which was made meate for the fishes of the sea, and of Zenobius which was a very good Christian, which also was slaine with brickebates in the same place. Eusebius. lib. 8. cap. 13.

Furthermore he maketh mention in the same place of others which were not tormented to death, but every day terrified and feared without ceasing: Of some others that were brought to the sacrifices and commaunded to doe sacrifice, which woulde rather thrust their right hande into the fire, than to touch the prophane or wicked sacrifice; also of some others that before they were apprehended, would cast downe themselves from steepe places, lest that being taken they should commit any thing against their professiō. Also of two virgines very faire and proper, with their

mother also which had studiously brought them vp, euen from their infancy in all godlines, being long sought for and at the last founde, and straightly kept by their keepers, whiche they made their excuse to do that which nature required, threw themselves downe headlong into a river; also another two yong maides being sisters, & of a worshipfull flock, moued with many goodly vertues, which were cast of the persecutors into the sea: and these things were done at Antioche as Eusebius in his 8. booke, and 13. chap. affirmeth. But Sylluanus the Bishop of Emilia & notable martyr together with certaine others were throwen to the wilde beastes. Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 13.

Diuers and sondy tormentes were the christians in Mesopotamia molested with, where they were haged vp by the secte, & their heads downeward, & with the snok of a small fire strangled. And also in Capadocia, where the Martyrs had their legs broken. Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 12.

Henricus de Erfordia maketh mention of the Martyrs of Tharus in Cilicia as Tharatus, Probus, and Andronicus: But yet the Martyrs in the region of Pontus suffered far more passing and sharper tormentes, whereof I will hereafter make mention. Eusebius ibidem. So outrageous was the beginning of the persecution whiche the Emperour made in Nicomedia in Bithynia, as afore is laide, that he refrained not from the slaughter of the children of Emperours, neither yet from slaughter of the most chiefe princes of his court, who a litle before he made as much of, as if they had ben his owne childre: Such an other was Peter, which among diuers and sundry tormentes: (among who he being naked was lifted vp, his whole body being beaten with whips and torne, that a man might see y bare bones; and after they had mingled vineger & salt together, they poured it vpon the most tender parts of his body, & lastly roasted at a soft fire, as a man would roast fleshy to eate, as a victorious Martyr, ended his life. Dorotheus and Gorgonius being in great authoritie and office vnder the Emperour, after diuers tormentes were strangled with a halter, which both being of the priue chamber, to him, when they saw & beheld the greuous punishment of Peter their household copation: wherefore (saith they of Emperour) do you punish in Peter that opinion which is in all vs: why is that accounted in him an offence, that all we confesse? we are of that faith religion & iudgement y he is of. Wherefore he commaunded them to be brought forth, & almost with like paynes to be tormented as Peter was, & afterwarde hanged. Euseb. Rufini Lib 8. cap. 6. After whom Anthonius the Bishop of Nicomedia after he had made a notable confession, & bringing with him a great company of Martyrs, was beheaded. Wheremen being thus dispatched y Emperour vainly thought y he might cause y rest to do what euer him listed. To this ende came Lucianus the Elder of the congregation of Antioche, and was martyred after hee had made his Apologie before the Emperour. Eusebius. Lib. 8. Cap. 13.

Hermanus also that monster, caused Serena the wife of Dioclesian the Emperour, to be martyred for the Christian Religion: so much did the rage of persecutiō utterly forget all naturall affectes. Other Martyrs of Nicomedia doth Nicephorus in hys vii. booke and xiiii. chapter recite, as Eulampius and Eulampia, Agapen, Irene, Chionia, and Anastasia, vnder Illyricus, chiefe officer, were bound hand & foot to a post and bent. Vincentius. Lib. 12. cap. 66. And also Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 6. mentionerth such an other like matter full of horror and grief. Here assembled together in their temple many Christian men to celebrate the memory of the Passiō of Christ, of euery age and sorte some: There Maximianus thinking to haue bene geuen a very fit occasion to execute hys tyranny vpon the poore Christians, sent thither such as should burne the temple, the doores being shut and closed rounde about. Wherthen came they with fire; but first they commaunded the cryer with a loud voyce to cry, y who soeuer would haue life, should come out of the temple, & do sacrifice vpon the next altar they came vnto of Iupiter; and vnto they would do this, they should all be bent with the temple. When one stepping vp in the temple, answered in the name of all y rest with great courage & boldnes of minde, that they were all Christians, & believed that Christ was their onely God & kings; and that they woulde doe sacrifice to him, with his father and holy Ghost, & that they were now all ready to offer vnto him. With these words the fire was kindled and compassed about the temple, and there were bent of men, women, and children certeine thousandes. There were also in Arabia, very many martyrs slayne with axes, as Eusebius. Lib. 8. cap. 12. There was in Idenicia a cite, vnto which the Emperour sent his Edictes that they should doe sacrifice to the gods, and worship Idoles; all which Citizens the Mayor him-

Two Virgines with their mother martyrs. Two other maydens sisters martyrs. Sylluanus Bishop of Emilia martyr. Martyrs of Mesopotamia. Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 12. Martyrs of Capadocia. Martyrs of Tarlus. Tharatus, Probus, Andronicus martyrs. Martyrs of Pontus. Martyrs of Nicomedia. Persecution in Nicomedia exceeding. Peter a most valiant and constant martyr.

Dorotheus, Gorgonius, Martyrs.

Anthonius Bishop of Nicomedia with a great multitude of martyrs headed. Lucianus the elder of Antioche martyr.

Serena wife of Dioclesian Emperour martyr. Niceph. lib. 7. cap. 14. Eulampius, Agape, Irene, Chionia, Anastasia. Martyrs.

Twenty thousand Martyrs burnt together in one Church. Martyrs of Arabia. Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 12.

The noble courage and constancie of a Christian Martyr.

Euseb. Lib. 8. Cap. 34.

Persecution first beginning in the Emperours Campe.

Euseb. Lib. 8. cap. 4.

A notable religion and fayth in souldiours.

Euseb. Lib. 8. cap. 7.

Martyrs of Tyre in Phenicia.

Pamphilus Bishop of Cesarea martyr. Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 13.

Martyrs of Syria. Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 6.

Nannion Martyr. Zenobius a Philisition Martyr.