

were saide to be the habitations, and resting places of the poore and miserable Christians. Eusebius. Lib. 10. cap. 14. Of those worthy men and famous Martyrs, which in this persecution founde the way to heauen, Nicephorus. Lib. 7. cap. 10. first speaketh of Theodorus, who first being hanged vpon the crosse, had naules thrust into his armes pits, and after that his head stricken. Also of another Theodorus being the Bishop of Syze, the thirde was a man of Berga. Basilus also the Bishop of Amalerus, Nicolaus, the Bishop of Myrozus, Gregorius, of Armenia the great: After that, Paule of Neocæsaria, which by the impious commandement of Licinius had both his hands cut of with a searing yron. Besides these were in the Citie of Sebastia, xl. worthy men, & Christian souldiours in the vehement cold time of winter, souled and drowned in a hoyle pond, where Locias as yet, of whom we speake before, and Agricolaus executing the Spheues office vnder Licinius in the East parts, were aliue: and were in great estimation, for inventing of new and strange tormentes against the Christians. The names of those 40. good men, were caried to Beraclea a Citie in Thracia, and there with a certaine Deacon whose name was Amones, were (after innumerable tormentes by them most constantly indured) slaine with the sword. These thinges wyreth Nicephorus. Also Zozomenus in his ninth booke & 2. Chapter maketh mention of the same Martyrs. And Basilus in a certaine Oracion seemeth to increase of their history, sauing that in the circumstances he somwhat varieth. And surely Licinius was determined, for that the first face of this persecution fel out according to his desire, to haue ouerturne all the Christians: to which thing neither counsell, nor good will, nor yet oportunitie, perchance wanted: vntill God had brought Constantinus into those partes, where he gouerned: where, in the warres which hee himselfe began (knowing right well that Constantinus had intelligence of his conspiracy & treason) ioyning battaile with him, was most cowardly overcome.

Diuers battailes betweene them were fought, the first fought in Hungarie, where Licinius was overthrowen: When he fled into Macedonia, & repairing his army, was againe discomfited. Finally, being vanquished, both by sea and land: he lastly, at Nicomedia, yelued himselfe to Constantine: and was commaunded to liue a private life in Thes-salia, where at length he was slaine by the souldiours.

Thus haue ye heard, the ende and conclusion of all the vii. tyrants, which were the authors and workers of this x. and last persecutio, against the true people of God. The chiefe Captaine, and incentour of which persecution was first Dioclesian, who died at Salena, as some say, by his owne poyson. An. 319. The next was Maximian, who as is sayde, was hanged of Constantine at Massilia, about the yeare of our Lorde, 310. When died Galerius, plagued with an horrible disease sent of God. Seuerus was slaine by Maximian, father of Maxentius the wicked tyrant was overcome and vanquished of Constantine. an. 318. Maximinus the vii. tyrant taried not long after, who being overcome by Licinius, died, about the yeare of our Lorde, 320. Lastly, how this Licinius was overcome by Constantine and slaine. An. 324. is before declared. Only Constantius, the father of Constantine being good and a godly Emperour, died in the third yeare of the persecution. An. 310. and was buried at York. After whom succeeded after his godly father, Constantinus, as a seconde Moses sent and led vp of God to deliuer his people out of this so miserable captiuitie, into libertie most ioyfull.

Now remaineth after the end of these persecutors thus described, to gather vp the names & stories of certain particular Martyrs, which nowe are to be set forth worthy of speciall memory: for their singular constancie & fortitude, shewed in their sufferings & cruell tormentes. The names of all which that suffered in this foresaid tenth persecution, being in number infinite, in vertue most excellēt, it is impossible heere to comprehend: but the most notable, and in most approued authors expressed, we thought heere to insert, for the more edification of other Christians, which may and ought to looke vpon their examples, first beginning with Albanus, the first Martyr that euer in England suffered death for the name of Christ.

At what time Dioclesian & Maximian the Pagan Emperours had directed out their letters with all severity, for the persecuting of the Christians: Alban being then an infidell, receiued into his house a certaine Clerke, fleeing from the persecutors hands, whom when Alban beheld, continually both day & night to perseuer in watching and in prayer: suddenly by the great mercy of God, he began to imitate the example of his faith & vertuous life: whereupon by little and little he being instructed by his holesom exhortation, and leauing the blindness of his Idolatry, be-

came at length a perfect Christian. And when the forenamed Clerke had lodged with him a certaine time, it was enformed the wicked Prince, that this good man & Confessor of Christ (not yet condemned to death) was harbored in Albans house, or very neare vnto him. whereupon immediately he gaue in charge to the souldiours, to make more diligent inquisition of the matter. Who as soone as they came to the house of Alban the Martyr, hee by and by putting on the apparell wherewith his guest and master was apparelled (that is, a garment at that time used, named Caracalla) offered him selfe in the steade of the other to the souldiours: who binding him, brought him forth with to the iudge. It fortuned that at that instant when blessed Alban was brought vnto the Iudge, they founde the same Iudge at the altiers offering sacrifice vnto Demils, who as soone as hee sawe Alban, was straight waies in a great rage, for that hee woulde presume of his owne voluntary will, to offer him selfe to perill, and geue him selfe a prisoner to the souldiours, for safe garde of his guest whom he harbored: and commaunded him to be brought before the Images of the deuils whome he worshipped, saying: For that thou haddest rather hide & conuey away a rebel, then to deliuer him to the officers, and that (as a contemner of our Gods) he should not suffer punishment and merite of his blasphemye: looke what punishment he should haue had, thou for him shalt suffer the same: if I perceiue thee any wher to reuolt from our manner of worshipping. But blessed Alban, who of his owne accord had bewrayed to the persecutors that hee was a Christian, feared not at all the manaces of the Prince, but being armed with spirituall armour, openly pronounced that hee woulde not obey his commaundement. Then sayd the Iudge: of what stocke or kindred art thou comde? Alban answered, what is that to you, of what stocke soeuer I am come of, if you desire to heare the veritie of my Religion, I do ye to wit that I am a Christian, and apply my selfe altogether to that calling. Then sayd the Iudge, I would knowe thy name, and see thou tell me the same without delay. Then sayde hee, my parentes named me Alban, and I worship and honour the true and liuing God, which hath created all the worlde. Then sayd the Iudge fraught with fury, if thou wilt enioy the felicitie of this present life, doe sacrifice (and that out of hande) to these mighty Gods. Alban replieth: these sacrifices which ye offer vnto deuils, can neither helpe them that offer the same, neither yet can they accomplish the desires and prayers of their suppliants: But rather shal they, what soeuer they be, that offer sacrifice to these Idoles, receaue for their neede enerlasting paines of hell fire. The Iudge, when he heard these words, was passing angry, and commaunded the tormentors to whip this holy Confessor of God, intending to overcome the constancy of his hart w stripes, which had preuailed nothing with wordes. And when he was cruelly beaten, yet suffered he the same patiently, nay rather ioyfully, for the Lordes sake. When the Iudge saw that he would not with tormentes be overcome, nor be reduced from the worship of Christian Religion, he commaunded him to be beheaded.

The rest that followeth of this story in the narration of Bede, as of dying by the kniue, as Alban went to the place of his execution: then of making a wellspring in the top of the hill, and of the falling out of the eyes of him that did behead him (with such other prodigious miracles mentioned in his story) because they seeme more legedlike, then truthlike: againe, because I see no great profit, nor necessarie in the relation thereof, I leaue them to the free iudgement of the Reader, to thinke of them, as cause shall moue him.

The like estimation I haue of the long story, wherewith is written at large a fabulous discourse of all the doings & miracles of S. Alban, taken out of the Librarie of S. Albans, compiled (as there is saide) by a certaine Pagan, who (as he sayth) afterwarde went to Rome, there to be Baptised. But because in the beginning or Prologue of the Booke, the sayde writer maketh mention of the ruinous walles of the towne of Verolanium, containing the story of Albanus, and of his bitter punishments: which walles were then falling downe for age, at the writing of the sayde booke, as he saith: Therby it seemeth this story to be written a great while after the martyrdome of Alban: either by a Britaine, or by an English mā. If he were a Britaine, how then did the Latin translation take it out of the English tongue, as in the Prologue hee him selfe doeth testifie. If hee were an English mā, how then did he go by to Rome for baptisme, being a Pagan, when he myght haue bene baptised among the Christian Britaines more neare at home.

But among at other evidences and declarations sufficient to disproue this Legendary story of S. Alban, nothing maketh more against it, then the very story it selfe: as where

late persecuti-
on named.
Theodorus.
An other
Theodorus By-
shop of Tyrus.
A man of Per-
ga.
Nicholaus By-
shop of
Mirorus.
Gregorius By-
shop of Arme-
nia.
Paulus Byshop
of Neocæsaria,
with 40. other
martyrs,
XL good men
and their wiues
martyrs.
Amones with
xl wiues of xl
men martyrs.
The wicked
purpose of
Licinius had
he not bene
prevented by
God and slayne
by Constanti-
nus.
Licinius ouer-
come in battaile
by Constanti-
nus.

The end and
death of the ty-
rantes whiche
were the au-
thors of this x.
persecution.

A briefe story
of the most no-
table Martyrs,
that suffered in
this x. persecu-
tion.

Albanus,
Martyr.

Fruite of hospita-
litye to be
noted.

Albanus
first conuer-
ted, and by
what occa-
sion.

Albanus
offereth
himselfe to
death for
another.

The words
of the
Iudge to
Albanus.

The constan-
cy and zeale
of Albanus.

The confes-
sion of
Albanus.

The suffe-
ring and
martyr-
dome of
Alban.

Superfluous
miracles in
this story
written by
Bede omit-
ted.

The legend
of S. Alban
disproued.