

AURELIUS PRUDENTIUS
A BOHEMIAN ECCLESIASTICAL LATIN INSCRIPTION

Aurelius Prudentius is cited twice in the work titled, *The Cathedral of Assumption of Our Lady and Saint John the Baptist. A Bohemian Ecclesiastical Latin Inscription.*

Prudentius, as he is commonly known; is first met recounting the life and death of Vincent, a Christian man who was born in the late 3rd Century CE. He had written about Vincent's martyrdom in his work, *Liber Peristephanon*, the *Book of the Crowns of Martyrdom.*

The second time we meet Prudentius is at the closing when the fourth stanza of his poem is cited, *Hymnus ante somnum, Before Sleep.*

Prudentius was born in the north-east of Hispania province. He was a lawyer, and very competent within his profession. After practising law for a decade, he was called to Rome. He had been summoned by the Emperor. He was noted for his acuity, consequently he worked in the Imperial Chancellery. After a dozen years in Rome, he returned to Hibernia. Prudentius settled in his home-region of Aragon. He adopted a contemplative life-style and occupied his time by writing poetry. He also followed a vegetarian diet. He was a Christian.

Hymnus ante somnum is cited in full.

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HYMNUM ANTE SOMNUM
BEFORE SLEEP

Fluxit labor diei,	The toil of the day is ebbing,
redit et quietis hora,	The quiet comes again,
blandus sopor vicissim	In slumber deep relaxing
fessos relaxat artus.	The limbs of tired men.
mens aestuans procellis	And minds with anguish shaken,
curisque sauciata	And spirits racked with grief,
totis bibit medullis	The cup of all forgetting
obliviale poculum.	Have drunk and found relief.
serpit per omne corpus	The still Lethean waters ¹
Lethea ¹ vis, nec ullum	Now steal through every vein,
miseris doloris aegri	And men no more remember
patitur manere sensum...	The meaning of their pain...
corpus licet fatiscens	Let, let the weary body
iaceat recline pallum,	Lie sunk in slumber deep.
Christum tamen sub ipso	The heart shall still remember
meditabimur sopore.	Christ in its very sleep.

Aurelius Prudentius

Footnote: 1 **Lethea, Lethean waters**, from Greek mythology, refers to the Lethe River, one of five rivers of the Underworld of Hades. The Lethe is also known as the *Ameles potamos*, the river of *unmindfulness*. All who drank from the Lethe experienced complete forgetfulness. Lethe was also the name of the Greek spirit of forgetfulness and oblivion, with whom the river is often associated.