Saint George.

Chorus.

"Saint George for Merry England!"—so we cried long ago,
When our barons and our yeomen went out to meet the foe;
"Saint George, Saint George for England!" still it rings
o'er the field,
For yet another warfare needs our Saint's spear and shield.

For the fierce and crafty Dragon
Of Heresy and Sin
Hath spoiled our pleasant borders,
And made his home therein.
O Warrior-Saint of England,
Come with lance, come with sword,
And slay for us the Dragon
In the might of Christ our Lord.

Oh! the comely Church of England
Whom the wicked have made weak,
Who for years hath sitten captive
With the tears upon her cheek!
Ride fast, dear Knight of England,
With thy gleaming lance and sword
And restore our fettered Princess
To the freedom of the Lord.

Our England's face is altered
Since the happy days of yore;
But if thou would'st ride across it
Her fields should bloom once more;
And the bells in all her Abbeys
Should ring out once again
If the Bride were but delivered,
If the Dragon were but slain.

Then, Red-Cross Saint of England,
Shall come back the good old days,
And our men and maids invoke thee,
And our children sing thy praise.
And folk shall call our country
"Merry England" then indeed,
When the Dragon shall be slaughtered,
When the Princess shall be freed.

S.M.X.

April 1.

Ven. John Britton, layman ; martyred at York, 1598.

They that hated us plundered for themselves. For Thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Arise, O Lord, help us and redeem us for Thy Name's sake.
Psalm xlii. 11, 22, 26.

Being a zealous Catholic, he was, for a great part of his life, exposed to persecutions on account of his conscience, and generally obliged to be absent from his wife and family.

We Catholics, tormented sore
With heresee's fowl railinge tongue,
With prisons, tortures, loss of goodes,
Of lande, yea lyves, even thieves amonge ;
Do crave with harte surcharged with grieffe
Of Thee, sweet Jesu, some relieffe.

Woe crave relieffe in this distresse,
We seek some ease of this annoye,
Yet are we well content with all,
So Thee in end we may enjoye;
Ourselves to Thee we do resigne,
Relieve us, Lord, our cause is Thine.

William Blundell, 1560—1638.

April 2.

Blessed John Payne, convert, priest; martyred at Chelmsford, 1582.

Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ? I. S. John v. 5.

Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. Acts vii. 59.

At the place of his martyrdom he made a full declaration of his faith in the Most Holy Trinity and the Incarnation. He then forgave all, and Eliot (who had betrayed him) by name, and prayed for him, and solemnly protested his innocence of every treasonable act or word.

April 3.

The love of Christ constraineth us. IJ. Corinthians v. 14.

Here (in the Crucifix) is great matter of love, and so great that if any person will either give his love freely, or else for some certain price sell it, He that died on the Cross is best worthy to have it. If thou search in Heaven and on earth one person upon whom thou mayest best bestow thy love, thou shalt find none comparable unto Christ Jesus, so wise, so mighty, so gentle, so kind, so amiable, far passing all other; and thereto He is much desirous of thy love. And if thou wilt sell thy love, I trow there is none that will give unto thee more liberally for the same, than He hath done. Where shalt thou find him that will shed one drop of blood out of his heart for thy sake? Where shalt thou find him that will give his own soul and life for thy love?

Blessed John Fisher, Sermon on the Passion.

April 4.

Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, do manfully, and be strengthened. I. Corinthians xvi. 13.

Power is made perfect in infirmity. II. Corinthians xii. 9.

Paint not, and fret not, for threatened woe,
Watchman on Gruth's grey height !
Dew though the faithful, and fierce though the foe,
Weakness is aye Heaven's might.
Quail not, and quake not, thou Warder bold,
Be there no friend in sight ;
Turn thee to question the days of old,
When weakness was aye Heaven's might.
Moses was one, yet he stayed the sin
Of the host, in the Presence bright ;
And Elias scorned the Carmel-din,
When Baal would scan Heaven's might.
Time's years are many, Eternity one,
And one is the Infinite ;
The chosen are few, few the deeds well done,
For scantness is still Heaven's might.

J. H. Newman.

April 5.

They have given the dead bodies of Thy servants to be meat for the fowls of the air. They have poured out their blood as water on every Side, and there was none to bury them, Psalm lxxviii. 2, 3.

The land is dyed in blood! In the eyes of the blessed angels it must glow crimson of hue like a blood-red rose upon the heart of God! From north to south, from east to west, from Newcastle to Launceston, from Norwich to Anglesea, it has been bathed in the purest blood that ever flowed from human hearts. In every busy market town the drops of that blood are seen; the roads and lanes and fields are bathed in it, for they have been trodden down by many a martyr's feet.

April 6.

Know ye that the Lord will hear your prayers, if you continue with perseverance in fastings and prayers in the sight of the Lord. Remember Moses, the servant of the Lord, who overcame Amalec, . . , not by fighting with the sword, but by holy prayer. Judith iv, 11, 12.

Prayer.

O fortress of the faithful ! sure defence,
In which doth Christians' cognizance consist ;
Their victory, their triumph comes from thence,
So forcible, hell-gates cannot resist :
A thing whereby both angels, clouds and stars
At man's request fight God's revengeful wars.
Nothing more grateful in the highest eves,
Nothing more firm in danger to protect us,
Nothing more forcible to pierce the skies,
And not depart till mercy do respect us :
And, as the soul life to the body gives,
So prayer revives the soul, by prayer it lives.

Ven. Robert Southwell, S.J.

April 7.

VV. Alexander Rawlins, priest, and Henry Walpole, priest, S.J.; martyred at York, 1595.
VV. Edward Oldcorne, priest, S.J., and Ralph Ashley, lay-brother, G.J.; martyred at Worcester, 1606.

In humility, let each esteem others better than themselves. Philippians ii. 3.

Venerable Alexander Rawlins being brought out to the hurdle on which he and Father Walpole were to be drawn to the place of execution, laid himself down on the left side of the hurdle, saying that he left the more honourable place for his betters ; and here he waited for two whole hours before his fellow confessor twas brought out to him, spending his time in prayer to God, and in speaking things of edification to the people . . . When they arrived at the gallows . . . he kissed first the gallows, then the ladder, and afterwards the rope, as the happy instruments which were to send him to heaven.

April 8.

Thou also by the blood of Thy testament hast sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water. Zacharias ix. 11.

Father Henry Walpole related of himself that when the body of the Rev. Father Edmund Campion was quartered at the place of execution, he, Father Walpole, then a heretic, stood looking on amongst the rest. As the executioners threw the quarters of the martyr into a cauldron full of water, a drop of it, mixed with the blood of the martyr, was splashed out, and fell on Walpole's coat. From a heretic he became a Catholic without delay, from a layman, a Religious of the Society of Jesus, from a spectator of martyrdoms, an admirable martyr, the most distinguished among the ten thousand converts said to have been made by Campion's death.

April 9.

I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me. Philippians iv. 13.

I am much astonished that so vile a creature as I am should be so near, as they tell me, to the crown of martyrdom : but this I know for certain, that the blood of my most blessed Saviour and Redeemer, and His most sweet love, is able to make me worthy of it . . . . I want very much to have a book or two for a few hours; but if I cannot have them, Jesus, our God and Lord, is at hand; and He is the Eternal Wisdom.

From letter of Ven. Henry Walpole, in York Castle.

April 10.

If any of you err from the truth, and one convert him: he must know, that he who causeth a sinner to be converted from the error of his way, shall save his soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.
S. James v. 19, 20.

On the day before his martyrdom (April 7, 1606), the Venerable Edward Oldcorne converted and reconciled to the Church a fellow-prisoner, a notorious thief and perverse Calvinist, who himself lay under sentence of death. This man all alone walked alongside of the hurdle on which the martyr was laid, all the way to the place of execution. When asked why he did so, be answered he would follow his father to his death, whom he hoped to follow after his death to a better place. "Why," said they, "art thou become a Papist?" "I am a Catholic," said he, "I thank God and this good father, and so I mean to die."

April 11.

Ven. George Gervase, priest, O.S.B., convert ; martyred at Tyburn, 1608,

O Lord, Thou knowest that whereas I might be delivered from death, I suffer grievous pains in body ; but in soul I am well content to suffer these things because I fear Thee.
II. Machabees vi. 30.

What I have said my blood is ready to answer.
Words of Ven, George Gervase at his trial.

April 12.

He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me.

S. Matthew x. 37.

My friendes, whose kindness doth their Judgement blynde,
"Know you" say they "the dangers where you runn,
Which Zeale hides from you, but Compassion
Tells us? You feele the blow ; the smarte wee finde."
I know it well, and as I calle to mynde,
This is the bill :—dearness, affliccion,
Friendes, fortune, pleasure, fame, hope, life, undone ;
Want, prison, torment, death, shame—what's behynde ?
Is then myselfe transmuted into steele,
That neither this, nor that, nor all can feele,
Nor can it bend my mynde which theirs doth breake ?
Not soe, not soe, for I am not insensate,
But feele a double grief, that for Christ sake
I have noe more to spend, nor have spent e'en that !

William Alabaster, c, 1600.

April 13.

VV. John Lockwood and Edmund Catherick, priests; martyred at York, 1642.

I beseech thee, my son, look upon heaven and earth, and all that is in them: and consider that God made them out of nothing, and mankind also. So thou shalt not fear this tormentor.

II. Machabees vii. 28, 29.

At the foot of the ladder Mr. Lockwood turned to Mr. Catherick, saving, "Take courage; we have almost run our race, shall we faint and be tired when in sight of the prize ? O let us run in spirit to our Saviour in the garden, and call upon Him in His agony and bloody sweat."

April 14.

And Jesus said: Can you drink the chalice that I shall drink ? They say to Him : We can.

S. Matthew xx. 22.

O blessed Lord Jesus ! who submittest Thyself to death for the example and comfort of Thy servants at the hour of their deaths, be near us, we beseech Thee, at this moment; moderate our fears, strengthen our faith, and confirm our hopes, that in obedience to Thy call we may go forth to meet Thee readily and cheerfully, and thankfully drink of Thy chalice, how bitter soever to nature. O Jesus ! sweeten it by Thy grace; help Thy poor servants that call upon thee, that we may here lay down our lives in obedience to Thy holy will, and in defence of Thy holy religion with constancy and perseverance.

Ven. John Lockwood's prayer at the gallows.

April 15.

Thus did this man die, leaving not only to young men, but to the whole nation, the memory of his death, for an example of virtue and fortitude.

II. Machabees vi, 31.

The holy man (Mr. Lockwood) began to climb up the ladder as well as he could ; but finding himself out of breath, he made a halt, and turning to the sheriff with a smiling countenance, "Good Mr. Sheriff,' says he, "have a little patience with me ; indeed this same climbing the ladder is a piece of hard service for an old man of fourscore and seven: however, I will do my best; for who would not take thus much pains Mr. Sheriff, to get Heaven at the journey's end?"

April 16

My heart is troubled within me: and the fear of death is fallen upon me . . . I waited for Him that hath saved me from pusillanimity of spirit and a storm,

Psalm liv. 5, 9.

Mr. Catherick, being asked by Mr. Lockwood at the gallows, how he did, replied : "In good heart, blessed be God! and ready to suffer with constancy the death His Providence has allotted me. Yes, my dear father, I am willing and ready to follow you, thanks be to my Lord and Saviour Jesus, who by His grace Has strengthened me, and by your good example has encouraged me." His last words were: "Lord, I obey; be near me, O Lord, my soul hath trusted in Thee, let me not be confounded for ever."

April 17.

Ven. Henry Heath, priest, O.F.M. convert; martyred at Tyburn, 1643.

Thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as a way to them that went over,

Isaias li. 23,

I will bring them back again, because I will have mercy on them : and they shall be as they were when I had cast them off, for I am the Lord their God, and will hear them.

Zacharias x. 6.

He offered to lay himself down on the ground to be drawn in that manner over the stones and through the mire; but this was not allowed, so he was laid on the sledge, and drawn to Tyburn.

At the gallows after that he had recited aloud the Lauds Hymn for a martyr, "Martyr Dei, qui Unicum," etc., it being the day of S. Anicetus, Pope and Martyr, for his last prayer he made use of these short aspirations : "My Jesus, pardon me my sins! Jesus, convert England! Jesus, have mercy on this country! O England, turn thyself to the Lord thy God!"

April 18.

The Mother of Jesus saith to Him: They have no wine.

S. John ii, 3.

The father of the Venerable Henry Heath had hitherto continued Protestant, proof against all arguments; and now, upon the brink of his grave, Father Heath recommends his almost desperate condition to the care of the Blessed Virgin. When behold on a sudden the feeble old man, aged fourscore, crosses the sea, and unexpectedly calls for his son in his convent at Douay, there to abjure his errors, and to be taken into the Catholic Church.

The first in Father Heath's convent at Douay who had the news of his execution, was his aged father, then a lay-brother, informed by a vision of his son.

April 19.

Ven. James Ducket, convert, bookseller ; martyred at Tyburn, 1602.

Whatsoever shall befall the just man, it shall not make him sad.

Proverbs xii. 21.

On the day designed for his death, his wife came to speak with him, which she could not without tears. He bid her be of good comfort, and said his death was no more to him than to drink off the caudle which stood there ready for him. "If I were made," said he, "the Queen's secretary or treasurer, you would not weep; do but keep yourself God's servant, and in the unity of God's Church, and I, shall be able to do you more good, being now to go to the King of kings. I take it for a great favour from Almighty God, that I am placed amongst the thieves, as He Himself, My Lord and Master, was."

April 20.

VV. James Bell, priest, convert, and John Finch, layman, convert ; martyred at Lancaster, 1584.
VV. Richard Sergeant and William Thomson, priests; martyred at Tyburn, 1586.
V. Anthony Page, priest ; martyred at York, 1593.
VV. Francis Page, priest, S.J., Thomas Tichborne, and Robert Watkinson, priests ; martyred at Tyburn, 1602.

Far you were as sheep going astray: but you are now converted to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

I. S. Peter ii. 25.

On hearing his condemnation, the Venerable James Bell said to the judge: "I beg your Lordship would add to the sentence, that my lips and the tops of my fingers may be cut off for having sworn and subscribed to the articles of the heretics, contrary both to my conscience and God's truth."

He had at one time acted as a Protestant minister.

April 21.

Now he that planteth, and he that watereth are one. And every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour.

I. Corinthians iii. 8.

The Venerable John Flinch was so fervent a convert, as not only to neglect no means of sanctifying his own soul, but also to endeavour to be instrumental in procuring the conversion and salvation of others, as well by his own words and good examples, as by the assistance he gave to the labourers in God's vineyard, in whose service, for many years, he was wholly employed, conducting them to the houses of the faithful, and serving them in quality both of a clerk and of a catechist.

April 22.

Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.

S. John i. 47.

If I be made a victim upon the service and sacrifice of your faith, I rejoice.

Philippians ii. 17.

In the Venerable Anthony Page, the dove's simplicity was to be seen joined together with equal wisdom of the serpent ; stopping his ears unto the wicked charms of heretics, exposing all his body to death, quartering, burning and boiling, to save his Catholic head of faith from wounds of infidelity.

He writes thus from prison to his mother: " My blood I offer to Almighty God as a sacrifice . . . particularly in the behalf of your poor soul, which in truth, God knoweth, was the chief cause of my venturing my life, and the only cause of my coming soon into the danger."

April 23.

S. George, Martyr, Patron Saint of England.

Josue lifted his eyes, and saw a man standing over against him, holding a drawn sword, and he went to him and said: Art thou one of ours, or of our adversaries ? And he answered: No ; but I am prince of the host of the Lord, and now I am come.

Josue v. 13, 14.

Thou hast prepared a table before me against them that afflict me,

Psalm xxii. 5.

Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Psalm xxix. 6.

So great was the joy of the Venerable Francis Page at the approach of his martyrdom, that he was in doubt whether he should venture to celebrate Mass, for fear that he should not be able to contain himself during the Sacred Mysteries, from discovering the extraordinary motions of his heart, by such outward gestures and words as would be taken notice of and be heard by the other prisoners and by the keepers. . .

But that be might have some experience also of the great agony of Mount Olivet, as well as of the sweets of Mount Thabor : he was all of a sudden deprived of this extraordinary joy, and became like his Saviour, sorrowful unto death. This continued until the sheriff sent to tell him to prepare for execution, which message at once brought back calm and joy to his soul.

April 24.

And the man said to him: Be of good courage, thy cure from God is at hand.

Tobias v. 13.

As the Venerable Robert Watkinson was walking in London streets on the day before his apprehension, he met a stranger, who appeared to be a venerable old man, who saluted him with these words: "Jesus bless you, Sir, you seem to be sick and troubled with many infirmities; but be of good cheer, for within these four days you shall be cured of all." Which happened accordingly ; for the next day he was apprehended, tried, and condemned, which was on Saturday ; and on the Tuesday following, he received his crown.

April 25.

VV. Robert Anderton, and William Marsden, priests ; martyred in the Isle of Wight, 1586.

Lovely and comely in their life, even in death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, stronger than lions.

II. Kings i. 23.

From their early youth to the time of their death, they cherished for one another a holy friendship, approved by God and man.

O Lord, Thy will be done! But if we are to die, suffer us to die for Thy cause in our own country. We do not pray against death, but against the manner of it. Spare us, O Lord, and hear our prayer! Let us be taken on the English coast, let us be dragged to death, but excuse us from being swallowed up in the waves.

Prayer of the two martyrs in a storm at sea, on their way to England,

April 26.

Ven. Edward Morgan, priest ; martyred at Tyburn, 1642.

There were brought from Paul's body to the sick, handkerchiefs and aprons,

Acts xix, 12.

A priest coming to him in his prison, the day before his execution, found that he had been all that day satisfying all sorts of people that flocked to him begging his prayers. Some procured to take off all they could that was about him, as buttons, handkerchiefs, and at length tore off pieces of his coat, so much that he was brought to yield that his whole coat was taken from him, and another sent him, and the whole night he did not go to bed.

April 27.

Not with sadness or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver,

II, Corinthians ix. 7.

At Tyburn, Mr. Morgan having recommended himself most fervently to Almighty God, with a merry countenance wished Gregory (the executioner) to do his office, and gave him a piece of money.

Gregory going to dispose him in some posture, he said: "I pray thee, teach me, for I never was at this sport before." Whereupon the minister said: "Mr. Morgan, this is not a time to sport, nor is it a jesting matter." "Sir," said Mr. Morgan, "I know it is not jest, but good sober earnest ; but you cannot deny that God requireth a cheerful sacrifice, and I hope it is no offence to you and these good people that I go cheerfully and merrily to Heaven."

April 28.

He will overshadow thee with His shoulders : and under His wings thou shalt trust.

Psalm xc, 4.

In the fervent heat . . . of every temptation, God giveth the faithful man (that hopeth in Him) the shadow of His holy shoulders, which are broad and large, sufficient to refrigerate and refresh the man in that heat; and in every tribulation He putteth His shoulders for a defence between. And then what weapon of the devil may give us any deadly wound, while that impenetrable pavice* of the shoulder of God standeth alway between ?

Blessed Thomas More's "Dialogue of Comfort."

**Pavice was a medieval shield that could cover the whole body - Ed.*

April 29.

Under His wings thou shalt trust.

Psalm xc. 4.

Then goeth the verse farther, and saith unto such a faithful man, " et sub pennis ejus sperabis ;" that is, to wit, for the good hope thou hast in His help, He will take thee so near Him into His protection, that as the hen, to keep her young chickens from the kite, nestleth them together under her own wings: so fro[m]* the devil's claws, the ravenous Kite of this dark air, the God of heaven will gather His faithful trusting folk near unto His own sides, and set them in surety, very well and warm, under the covering of His own heavenly wings.

Id.

**Missing in the original. - Ed.*

April 30.

VV. Francis Dickenson, and Miles Gerard, priests ; martyred at Rochester, 1590.
Ven. William Southerne, priest ; martyred at Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1618,

We glory in you . , , for your patience and faith, and in all your persecutions and tribulations, which you endure. For an example of the just judgement of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which also you suffer.

II. Thessalonians i, 4, 5.

Lest the fair world should delight them
God, more fair, their longing drew ;
That the world might not affright them
Shewed Himself more awful too.

Worthy of all Heaven's glory
Surely was a strife like this!
Pondering the Cross's story
Martyrdom becometh bliss.