English Saints and Martyrs
August

The Assumption of Our Lady.

Hark, she is called, the parting hour is come;
Take thy farewell, poor world, Heaven must go home.
A piece of heavenly earth; purer and brighter
Than the chaste stars, whose choice lamps come to light her,
Whilst through the crystal orbs, clearer than they
She climbs; and makes a far more milky way.
She's called. Hark, how the dear immortal Dove
Sighs to His silver Mate, "Rise up, My Love;
Rise up, My Fair, My spotless One:
The winter's past; the rain is gone;
The spring is come; the flowers appear—
No sweets (save thou) are wanting here.
Come away, My Love; come away, My Dove;
Cast off delay:
The court of heaven is come to wait upon thee home;
Come, come away."

. . . .

She's called again. And will she go?
When heaven bids come, who can say No?
Heaven calls her, and she must away;
Heaven will not, and she cannot, stay.
Go, then; go, glorious on the golden wings
Of the bright youth of heaven, that sings
Under so sweet a burden. Go
Since thy dread Son will have it so.
And while thou goest, our song and we
Will, as we may, reach after thee.
Hail, holy Queen of humble hearts:
We in thy praise will have our parts.

Richard Crashaw, 1613-1650

August 1.

VV. John Fulthering and Thomas Welbourne, laymen; martyred at York, 1605.

With modesty admonish them that resist the truth : if peradventure God may give them repentance to know the truth, and they may recover themselves from the snares of the devil. II. Timothy ii. 25, 26.

They were zealous Catholics, and industrious in exhorting some of their neighbours to embrace the Catholic faith, and were upon that account arraigned and condemned to suffer as in cases of high treason.

August 2.

Turn ye to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: I will render thee double as I declare to-day. Zacharias ix. 12.

In prison was Joseph while his brethren were at large, and yet after were his brethren fain to seek upon him for bread. In prison was Daniel, and the wild lions about him: and yet even there God kept him harmless, and brought him safe out again. If we think that He will not do the like for us, let us not doubt but He will do for us either the like or better. Nor better may He do for us, if He suffer us there to die.

Blessed Thomas More, writing in prison.

August 3.

Ven. Thomas Belchiam, priest, O.F.M. Observant; Starved to death in prison, 1538.

Out of prison and chains sometimes a man cometh forth to a kingdom, and another, born king, is consumed with poverty, Ecclesiastes iv. 14.

Hardest servitude has he
That's gaoled in arrogant liberty:
And freedom, spacious and unflawed,
Who is walled about with God. *Francis Thompson.*

August 4.

Blessed William Horne, Carthusian lay-brother ; VV. Edmund Brindholm, priest; Giles Heron, and Clement Philpot, laymen; martyred at Tyburn, 1540.

What went you out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Behold, they that are clothed in soft garments are in the houses of kings. S. Matthew xi. 8.

Blessed William Horne could never be induced to quit his religious habit, which bad been for some time suppressed throughout the land. He endured a double martyrdom ; the sole survivor of his brethren who were starved to death in Newgate, he obtained at last his palm through the bloody gates of Tyburn.

August 5.

Who went about doing good, for God was with Him, Acts x. 38.

The Venerable Edward Gamber went about to do good everywhere, in times and places of the greatest danger, with a courage and strength of mind wonderfully surprising, and above the power and strength of man.

August 6.

The seal of Thy house hath eaten me up. Psalm Ixviii, 10,

Father Paul Heath having lately suffered at Tyburn, and the English friars at Douay having a solemn thanksgiving service on that occasion, Father Woodcock was so animated with a desire of meeting with the same crown, that he desisted not importuning his superiors till he procured leave to return again upon the English Mission.

The Venerable Thomas Whitaker was by nature fearful and faint-hearted . . . yet when it came to the upshot he generously said to the Sheriff: "Use your pleasure with me—a reprieve, or even a pardon upon your conditions, I utterly refuse."

August 7.

VV. Edward Bamber, John Woodcock, O.F.M., and Thomas Whitaker, priests; martyred at Lancaster, 1646. Wen. Nicholas Postgate, priest; martyred at York, 1679.

Old age is a crown of dignity, when it is found in the ways of justice, Proverbs xvi. 31.

Nor spar'd they Father Posket's blood;
A rev'rend priest, devout and good,
Whose spotless life in length was spun
To eighty years and three times one.
Sweet his behaviour, grave his speech,
He did by good example teach.
His love right bent, his will resign'd,
Serene his look, and calm his mind.
His sanctity to that degree
As Angels live, so lived he. *From a contemporary poem.*

August 8.

Blessed John Felton, layman ; martyred in S. Paul's Churchyard, 1570. Ven. John Finglow, priest; martyred at Work, 1586.

The just man, bold as a lion, shall be without dread, Proverbs xxviii. 1.

At the gallows Blessed John Felton pointed to the Bishop of London's gate (on which be had nailed the Bull of S. Pius V.), and said aloud, as if contented that his work was done: "The Sovereign Pontiff's letters against the pretended Queen were duly exhibited there, and now I am prepared to die, for the Catholic Faith."

The Venerable John Finglow suffered with that generous courage which seems to have been natural to the Seminarists from the very beginning, and with an ardent zeal for the confirmation of religion.

August 9.

VV. Thomas Palasor, priest ; John Norton and John Talbot, laymen ; martyred at Durham, 1600.

These three as with one mouth, praised, glorified, and blessed God in the furnace, Daniel ii, 51.

Why should they not be joyful, who already clasped the martyr's crown? We embrace the day which brings us to our home, which releases us from the snares of the world and restores us to paradise, to our

kingdom. What exile in a foreign land would not hasten to return home to his country?

S. Cyprian.

August 10.

A crown for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, a garment of praise for the spirit of grief. Isaias lxi. 3.

Their one and only anthem
The fulness of His love,
Who gives, instead of torment,
Eternal joys above:
Instead of torment, glory;
Instead of death, that life
Wherewith your happy Country
True Israelites! is rife.

S. Bernard de Morlaix.

August 11.

Ven. John Sandys, priest ; martyred at Gloucester, 1586.

And Stephen falling on his knees, cried with a loud voice, saying: Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep in the Lord, Acts vii. 59,

When the executioner had pulled from him his bowels, the blessed saint cried even with S. Stephen: " Lord, forgive my persecutors," and so fell asleep in the Lord.

August 12.

Ven. Charles Mahony, priest, O.F.M.; martyred at Ruthin, 1679.

You are come to the city of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem. Hebrews xii. 22.

The holy martyr was arrested in Wales when about to embark for his native Ireland. He went to his death in the rough habit formerly so familiar and so dear to the inhabitants of the Island of Saints, but which for nigh on a century had not been seen amongst them. Instead of the earthly fatherland to which he had thought to return, God called him to his eternal Fatherland, more peaceful and more fair.

August 13.

Ven. William Freeman, priest; martyred at Warwick, 1595.
Ven. James Dowdall, merchant; martyred at Exeter, 1599.

My soul hath desired after the strong living God: when shall I come and appear before the face of God. Psalm xli. 3.

At the place of execution, where some others were to die that day, the Ven. William Freeman petitioned that he might be the first, but this was refused in the hope that the Sight of their death might terrify him, and bring him to a compliance; but this sight had a contrary effect upon him, and only served to give him a more ardent desire of dying for Christ.

August 14.

We would not be unclothed, but clothed upon: that that which is mortal may be 8wallowed up by life, II. Corinthians v. 4.

Let us never make our reckoning of long life. Keep it while we may, because God hath so commanded, but if God gibe the occasion that with This good will we may go, let us be glad thereof, and long to go to Him.

Blessed Thomas More.

August 15.

The Assumption of Our Lady.

The king arose to meet her , . . . and a throne was set for the king's mother, and she sat on his right hand. II. Kings ii, 19.

If sin be captive, grace must find release;
From curse of sin the innocent is free;
Tomb prison is for sinners that decease,
No tomb but throne to guiltless doth agree :
Though thralls of sin lie lingering in the grave,
Yet faultless corse with soul reward must have.

Gem to her worth, spouse to her love ascends,
Prince to her throne, queen to her heavenly King,
Whose court with solemn pomp on her attends,
And quires of saints with greeting notes do sing;
Earth rendereth up her undeserved prey,
Heaven claims the right, and bears the prize away.

Ven. Robert Southwell, S.J.

August 16.

Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. S. Matthew xxv. 21.

There is a word of Blessed Thomas More's that explains how he understood merriment. He used constantly to speak, when taking leave of his friends, of his hopes of being merry with them with God in heaven. Heaven, to him, was merriment, perfect truth, sincerity, innocence, joy in congenial society; above all, joy in the Source of all genuine and lasting mirth.

August 17.

Fear the Lord, and reverence His priests. Ecclesiasticus vii. 31.

A Justice said to the Venerable Ralph Milner: "Thou art worse than any Seminary Priest," and he answered: You say truly, for I shall never be so good as they."

August 18.

How can I do this wicked thing, and sin against my God? Genesis xxxix. 9.

That life would be more pleasing to my flesh than death, I neither can nor will deny, provided that my conscience be not injured. For rather than that should suffer, let death come, and life depart.

Blessed Thomas Percy.

I had rather choose to die a thousand deaths, than to possess a kingdom and live in mortal sin.

Ven. Richard Hurst.

The Venerable Hugh Moor absolutely refused to go to church, though this would have made atonement for his pretended treason ; and therefore had sentence to die.

August 19.

Ven. Christopher Robinson, priest; martyred at Carlisle, 1598.
Ven. Hugh Green, priest, convert; martyred at Dorchester, 1642.

They that turn many to justice shall shine as stars for all eternity. Daniel xii. 3.

The Ven. Christopher Robinson's meek behaviour at the scaffold; the sweetness of his words and countenance, and the constancy and cheerfulness with which he died, touched the hearts of many of the spectators, and was the occasion of many conversions.

The Ven. Hugh Green absolved two women at the gallows, who were hanged before him, and who had sent him word on the previous night that they would die in his Faith.

August 20.

Know ye that the Lord will hear your prayers, if you continue with fastings and prayers in the sight of the Lord. Judith iv. 11.

During Blessed Thomas Mercy's imprisonment at Lochleven, if, as often happened, meat was brought to him on a fast day, he contented himself with bread alone; and by his example he moved some of those attending on him to repent of their apostasy. . . . . Sometimes he spent whole days upon his knees . . . and prayer, to which he had been devoted all his life, was now more than ever his delight.

August 21.

Go ye into His gates with praise: give glory to Him, for the Lord is sweet. Psalm xcix. 4, 5.

Must it then be so? Am I to be honoured with so sublime a dignity? Good God, how unworthy I am of it! But since it has thus seemed good to Thy divine mercy, may Thy most holy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven !

Blessed Richard Kirkman, on hearing his sentence.

God be for ever blessed! This will be no more to me than to pay the common debt a little before the time. I am rejoiced therefore at the things that have been said to me, we shall go into the house of the Lord, and so we shall be with the Lord for ever.

Blessed William Lacey.

August 22.

Blessed Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland; martyred at York, 1572.
BB. Richard Kirkman and William Lacey, priests; martyred at York, 1582.
Ven. John Kemble, priest; martyred at Hereford, 1679.
Ven. John Wall, priest, O.F.M. ; martyred at Worcester, 1679.
Not rendering evil for evil, but contrariwise, blessing, 1. S. Peter iii. 9.

After the Venerable John Kemble's return to Hereford Gaol, he was frequently visited by Captain Scudamore's children, whom he treated with whatever he had that was good sent him by his friends; and being asked why he gave all to them, he made answer, because their father (who had apprehended him) was the best friend he had in the world,

August 23.

For my brethren, having now undergone a short pain, are under the Covenant of Eternal Life . . . But in me and in my brethren, the wrath of the Almighty, which hath justly been brought upon all our nation, shall cease. II. Machabees vii. 36, 38.

The greater the injury and injustice done against us by men to take away our lives, the greater our glory in eternal life before God. This is the last persecution that will be in England, therefore I hope God will give all His holy grace to make the best use of it.

Ven, John Wall, O.F.M.

August 24.

VV. Thomas Hackshot and Nicholas Tichborne, laymen;
martyred at Tyburn, 1601, for rescuing a priest.
Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends. S. John xv. 13.

O happy martyred saints,
To you I call and cry,
To help us in our wants
And beg for us mercie.

O Christ, that suffered death
Thy spouse for to defend,
Like constancie till death,
And in Heaven be our end. *16th Century.*

August 25.

He compassed Aaron with many little bells of gold . . . that as he went there might be a sound . . . for a memorial. Ecclesiasticus xlv. 10, 11.

A notable person coming unto him (the Venerable Roger Cadwallador) in his sickness, and he lying on his bed with his shackles on his legs, shaking them he said to him, that the high priest of the old law had little bells about the rim of his vestment; and I stirring my legs say: "Hear, O Lord, these are my little bells."

August 26.

Thou art my patience, O Lord. Psalm lxx. 5.

Some half an hour before the time of Father Cadwallador's suffering, the keeper, for a farewell, used all his art and cunning to make him distempered with passion; but found him so well fenced with patience, that it was all in vain. When the unskilful executioner went to put the halter about his neck, he seemed to receive it very patiently, as the yoke of his Master.

August 27.

Ven. Roger Cadwallador, priest; martyred at Leominster, 1610.
Ven. David Lewis, priest, S.J. convert; martyred at Usk, 1679.
I will requite you for this good turn, because you have done this thing. II. Kings ii. 6,

With reason I love my persecutors, for though they have done themselves a vast soul-prejudice, yet they have done me an incomparable favour, which I, shall eternally acknowledge.

Ven, David Lewis.

August 28.

VV. Robert Morton, priest, and Hugh Moor, layman, convert; martyred in Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1588. Ven. William Gunter, priest; martyred at The Theatre, London, 1588.
Ven. Thomas Holford, priest, convert ; martyred at Clerkenwell, 1588.
WV. William Dean, priest, and Henry Webley, layman; martyred at Mile End Green, 1588.
VV. James Claxton, priest, and Thomas Helton, Minim; martyred near Hounslow, 1588.
Wen. Edmund Arrowsmith, priest, S.J.; martyred at Lancaster, 1628.
So great a cloud of witnesses, Hebrews xii, 1.

The blessed man (Ven. Edmund Arrowsmith) being bound on the hurdle, held two papers between his hands, which were called "duae claves coeli," the one of them containing an act of the love of God, and the other of contrition, which he used for the increase of his devotion.

August 29.

Ven. Richard Herst, recusant farmer; martyred at Lancaster, 1628.
Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul, S. Matthew x. 28.

Going very merrily back to prison, after having been trailed by the legs along a stony road to the heretical service, he said to some Catholics: "They have tortured my body, but I thank God they have not hurt my soul." Looking up to the executioner, who was busy in fastening the rope, but knew not readily how to do it right, he merrily called him by his name, and said: "Tom, I think I must come and help thee."

August 30.

VV. Richard Leigh, priest; Richard Blower, Richard Martin, John Roche, and Edward Shelly, laymen ; Margaret Ward, gentlewoman; martyred at Tyburn, 1588.

They went . . . . rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer for the Name of Jesus, Acts v. 41.

In prison Margaret Ward was hung up by the hands, and cruelly scourged, which torments she bore with wonderful courage, saying "they were preludes of martyrdom, with which, by the grace of God, she hoped she should be honoured."

August 31.

Whoso shall confess Me before men, him also will I confess before My Father. S. Matthew x. 32.

When the Venerable Richard Leigh and his five companions were drawn through the streets of London to Tyburn, a gentlewoman of fashion, animated with a zeal and fortitude above her sex, crying out with a loud voice, exhorted them to be constant in their faith; and then forcing her way through the crowd, and kneeling down, asked their blessing. Upon which she was immediately apprehended and committed to prison ; as also was another Catholic, who, at the place of execution, hearing one of the Confessors earnestly requesting all Catholics, if any were there present, to pray for him, because he stood in much need of their prayers, and not thinking it enough to pray secretly in his heart, knelt down before all the multitude and prayed aloud for the Confessor; to his great encouragement and the great mortification of the persecutors.