

## NOVEMBER XVI.

## ST. EDMUND, C.

## ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

His life is accurately written by several hands: by his own brother Robert, who accompanied him in his journies to Rome. Also by Bertrand, the saint's companion and secretar<sup>y</sup> in his exile.

A. D. 1242.

ST. EDMUND RICH was the eldest son of Reynold Rich, a tradesmans of Abington in Berkshire and his wife Mabilia. His parents were but slenderly provided with the goods of this world, but possessed abundantly the true riches of virtue and divine grace. Reynold from the sale of his stock, leaving a moderate competence for the education of his children, and for a foundation for their industry to work upon, committed them to the care of his prudent and virtuous consort; and with her free consent made his religious profession in the monastery of Evesham, where he finished his mortal course with great fervour. Mabilia, who remained in the world, was not behindhand with him in aspiring ardently to Christian perfection. To accomplish the course of her penance, and to tame her flesh she practised great austerities, and constantly wore a rough hair cloth: she always went to church at midnight to matins, and by her own example excited her children to the heroic practice of virtue. Our saint in his childhood, by her advice, recited the whole psalter on his knees every Sunday and holiday, before he broke his fast, and on Fridays contented himself with only bread and water. How zealous soever the mother was in inspiring into the tender minds of her children a contempt of earthly things, and the greatest ardour in the pursuit of virtue, and

in suggesting to them every means of attaining to the summit of Christian perfection, Edmund not only complied joyfully with her advice, but always went beyond her directions, desiring in all his actions to carry virtue to the greatest heights; though in all his penances and devotions he studied secrecy as much as possible, and was careful to shun in them the least danger of attachment to his own sense. For that fundamental maxim of virtue he had always before his eyes that even devotion infected with self-will and humour, becomes vicious, and nourishes self-love and self-conceit, the bane of all virtue and grace in the heart. As for our young saint he seemed to have no will of his own, so mild, complying, and obliging was he to every one, and so dutiful and obedient to his mother and masters. And the sweetness and cheerfulness wherewith he most readily obeyed, and seemed even to prevent their directions, showed his obedience to be the interior sacrifice of his heart; in which the essence of that virtue consists: for a mere exterior compliance accompanied with reluctance, and, much more, if it break out into complaints and murmuring is a miserable state of constraint and compulsion, and a wilful and obstinate slavery to self-will, that domestic tyrant, which it fosters, arms, and strengthens, instead of subduing it. How grievously are those parents the enemies and spiritual murderers of their own children, who teach them to place their happiness in the gratification of their senses: and by pampering their bodies, and flattering their humours and passions, make their cravings and appetites restless, insatiable, and boundless, and their very bodies unfit for, and almost incapable of, the duties of penance, and even the labours of civil life. Abstemiousness and temperance were easy and agreeable, and a penitential life which appears so difficult to those who have been educa-

ted in sloth, softness, and delights, was, as it were, natural to our saint, who had, from his cradle, under the direction of his prudent and virtuous mother, inured his senses to frequent privations, his body to little severities, and his will to constant denials, by perfect meekness, humility, charity, and obedience, so that it seemed as naturally pliant to the direction of reason and virtue, as a glove is to the hand to use the expression of one of his historians and he was always a stranger to the conflicts of headstrong passions.

The saint performed the first part of his studies at Oxford, in which he gave very early indications of a genius above the common standard. It is indeed easy to understand with what ardour and perseverance a person of good abilities, and deeply impressed with a sense of religion, always applies himself to study, when this becomes an essential part of his duty to God. An uncommon fervour and assiduity in all religious exercises, and a genuine simplicity in his whole conduct, discovered his internal virtues, and betrayed the desire he had of concealing them. Retirement and prayer were his delight, and he sought no companions but those in whom he observed the like pious inclinations. He was yet young when Mabilia sent him and his brother Robert to finish their studies at Paris. At parting she gave each of them a hair shirt, which she advised them to use two or three days in a week, to fortify their souls against the love of pleasures, a dangerous snare to youth. It was her custom never to send them any linen, clothes, or other things, but she made some new instrument of penance a part of her present, to put them in mind of assiduously practising Christian mortification. Edmund had spent some time in that seat of arts and sciences, when his mother falling sick of a lingering illness, and perceiving that she drew near her end,

ordered him over to England that she might recommend to him the care of settling his brother and his two sisters in the world. Before she died she gave him her last blessing. The saint begged the same for his brother and sisters, but she answered: "I have given them my blessing in you: for through you they will share abundantly in the blessings of heaven." When he had closed her eyes, and paid her his last duties, he was solicitous where to place his sisters, and how to secure them against the dangers of the world, particularly as they were both extremely beautiful. But they were yet far more virtuous, and soon put him out of this pain, by declaring that it was their earnest desire to live only to God in a religious state. The saint was, in the next place perplexed where to find a sanctuary, in which they might most securely attain to that perfection to which they aspired. \* Many preferred those religious houses which seem to hold a rank in the world, and are richly founded; a thing very absurd in persons who renounce the world, to profess a state of abjection and poverty; though it may be often a part of prudence to choose a retreat which is free from the moral danger of distraction and anxiety, too apt to disturb the mind when under the pressure of extreme want.] St. Edmund had no views to temporal advantages in this inquiry; all his care was to find a nunnery, out of which the world was banished, and where the manner of life, regularity, example, and reigning maxims breathed the most perfect spirit of the holy institute. "To embrace a religious state," says the saint,<sup>1</sup> "is the part of perfection: but to live imperfectly in it, is the most grievous damnation." A fear of entangling himself, or others in any danger of sin, made him shun all houses in which a fortune

<sup>1</sup> S. Edmund, in Speculo, c. 1. ex Eusebio vulgo Emiseno, potius Gallico.

was exacted for the admission of postulants, which the canons condemn as simony in monasteries sufficiently founded; for though presents may be received, nothing can be asked or expected for the admission, which is something spiritual: nor for the person's maintenance, which the house in those circumstances is able and obliged to afford. After a diligent inquiry and search, the saint placed his two sisters in the small Benedictin nunnery of Catesby in Northamptonshire,<sup>1</sup> famous for the strictness of its discipline, where both served God with great fervour, were eminent for the innocence and sanctity of their lives, and died both successively prioresses.

St. Edmund had no sooner settled his sisters, but he went back to Paris to pursue his studies. Whilst he lived at Oxford he had consecrated himself to God by a vow of perpetual chastity, under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, in whom, under God, he placed a special confidence: and this vow he observed with the utmost fidelity his whole life, shunning, with the most scrupulous care, all levity in the least action, every dangerous liberty of his senses, and all company that could be an occasion of temptation. In his study he had an image of the Mother of God before his eyes, round which were represented the mysteries of our redemption; and, in the midst of his most profound studies, his frequent ejaculations to God were so ardent, that in them he sometimes fell into raptures. How desirous soever he appeared to become learned, his zeal to become a saint was much greater. By virtue he sanctified all his studies, and the purity of his heart replenished his soul with light, which en-

<sup>1</sup> This monastery is falsely said by Speed to have been of the Order of the Gilbertines, as bishop Tanner proves in his *Notitia Monastica*; for, from its foundation to its dissolution under Henry VIII. it professed the rule of St. Bennet.



abled him to penetrate, in them, the most knotty questions, and the most sublime truths. By his progress in learning he was the admiration of his masters, and for the purity of his life he was regarded as a miracle of sanctity. He constantly attended at the midnight office in St. Martin's church, and after that was over, spent some hours there in prayer, early heard mass in the morning, and then repaired to the public school, without taking food or rest. He went to vespers every day: studies, works of charity, holy meditation, and private prayer, took up the rest of his time. He fasted much, and every Friday on bread and water: wore a hair shirt, and mortified his senses in every thing. Allowing very little for his own necessities, he employed in alms the rest of the money which he received for his own uses. He seldom ate above once a day, and then very sparingly, slept on the bare floor, or on a bench, and for thirty years never undressed himself to sleep, and never lay down on a bed, though he had one in his room, decently covered, in order to conceal his austerities. After matins, at midnight, he usually continued his meditation and prayer till morning, and very rarely slept any more: if he did, it was only leaning his head against the wall, as he knelt or sat a little while. Many years before he was in holy orders, he said every day the priest's office, with salutations of the wounds of our Divine Redeemer, and a meditation on his sufferings. After he had gone through a course of the liberal arts and mathematics, and had taken the degree of master of arts, he was employed six years in teaching those sciences, especially the mathematics. Though, to avoid the danger of the distraction of the mind from heavenly things, to which these studies generally expose a soul, he used, as a counterbalance, much prayer and meditation, to nourish constantly in

his heart a spirit of devotion. Yet this at length suffered some abatement; and he seemed one night to see his mother in a dream, who, pointing to certain geometrical figures before him, asked him what all that signified? and bade him rather make the adorable Trinity the object of his studies. From that time he gave himself up entirely to the study of theology, and though out of humility he was long unwilling, he suffered himself to be overcome by the importunity of his friends, and proceeded doctor in that faculty, though whether this was at Paris, or Oxford, after his return to England, authors disagree. He interpreted the holy scriptures some time at Paris: it was his custom always to kiss that divine book out of religious respect, as often as he took it into his hands. As soon as he was ordained priest, he began to preach with wonderful unction and fruit. Even the lectures which he delivered in school, and his ordinary discourse were seasoned with heavenly sentiments of the divine love and praises, and breathed a spirit of God which extremely edified all that were present. Several of his auditors and scholars became afterward eminent for sanctity and learning. Seven left his school in one day to take the Cistercian habit; one of whom was Stephen, afterward abbot of Clairvaux, and founder of the monastery of the Bernardins at Paris.

Returning to England, he was the first that taught Aristotle's logic at Oxford,<sup>2</sup> where he remained from 1219 to 1226; but in frequent missions travelled often through all Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, and Worcestershire, preaching the word of God with great fruit and zeal. After having refused many ecclesiastical preferments, he at length accepted of a canonry, with the dignity of treasurer in the cathedral of Salisbury;

<sup>1</sup> Wood, *Hist. et Antiq. Oxon.* t. 1. p. 81. t. 2. p. 9 et 81.

but gave far the greatest part of the revenue to the poor, leaving himself destitute the greatest part of the year. He had not been long in this post, when the pope sent him an order to preach the crusade against the Saracens, with a commission to receive an honorary stipend for his maintenance, from the several churches in which he should discharge that office. The saint executed the commission with great zeal; but would receive no honorary stipend, or any kind of present for his maintenance. As he was preaching in the open air near the church at Worcester, a heavy shower fell all round the place, but the saint having given his blessing, and bade the people not to disperse, not a single drop touched any of them, or fell on the spot where they stood. When he preached, the words which came from his inflamed heart were words of fire, which powerfully converted souls. Persons the most profoundly learned were moved to tears at his sermons, and many became imitators of his penance and virtues. William, surnamed Longspear, the famous earl of Salisbury, who had lived a long time in the neglect of the essential duties of a Christian, and without ever approaching the sacraments, was so entirely converted by hearing a sermon which the saint preached, and by conversing some hours with him, that from that time he laid aside all other business to make the salvation of his soul his whole employment. The saint formed many excellent men of prayer, and was himself one of the most experienced doctors of an interior life, and most enlightened contemplatives in the Church. What he chiefly inculcated was a sincere spirit of humility, mortification, and holy prayer; and he was principally solicitous to teach Christians to pray in affection and spirit. "A hundred thousand persons," says the saint,<sup>1</sup> "are

<sup>1</sup> S. Edm. Cant. in Speculo, Bibl. Patr. t. 13. p. 362,



deceived in multiplying prayers. I would rather say five words devoutly with my heart, than five thousand which my soul does not relish with affection and understanding. *Sing to the Lord wisely*: What a man repeats by his mouth, that let him feel in his soul." A late French critical author<sup>2</sup> of a book entitled the Tradition of the Church concerning Contemplation, says of St. Edmund: "He applied himself from his youth to the contemplation of eternal truths; and so well united in himself (which is very rare) the science of the heart with that of the school, the mystical theology with the speculative, that by letting into his heart the lights of his understanding, he became a perfect contemplative, or mystic theologian; and he has no less enlightened the Church by the sanctity of his life, than by the admirable spiritual tract, called, the Mirror of the Church, in which are found many excellent things relating to contemplation."

The see of Canterbury had been long vacant, when pope Gregory IX. pitched upon Edmund to fill it. The chapter of Canterbury was unanimous in his favour, king Henry III. gave his consent, and the election was confirmed by his holiness. Matters were gone thus far, when a deputation was sent to Salisbury, to give notice to the saint of his election, and to conduct him to his flock. Edmund who was till then a stranger to these proceedings, protested loudly against the violence that was offered him. The deputies thus repulsed by him, applied to the bishop of Salisbury, who exerted his authority to compel the saint to acquiesce. Edmund submitted after much resistance, but had not quite conquered his fears and difficulties when he was consecrated, on the 2d of April, 1234. This dignity made no altera-

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lvi.

<sup>2</sup> F. Honoratus of St. Mary, in his historical table of contemplative writers, t. 1. p. 4.

tion in the humble sentiments or behaviour of our saint. He had still the same mean opinion of himself and observed the same simplicity and modesty in his dress, notwithstanding the contrary fashions of the bishops of that age. His chief employment was to inquire into and relieve the corporal and spiritual necessities of his flock, and he soon got the reputation of a primitive pastor. His revenues he chiefly consecrated to the poor, and had a particular care to provide portions for young women, whose circumstances would have otherwise exposed them to great dangers. He gave vice no quarter, maintained church discipline with an apostolic vigour, and was most scrupulously solicitous and careful that justice was impartially administered in all his courts, abhorred the very shadow of bribes in all his officers, and detested the love of filthy lucre, especially in the clergy. For the reformation of abuses, he published his Constitutions in thirty-six canons, in Lindwood, Spelman, Wilkins, Johnson, and in Labbe's editions of the councils.<sup>1</sup>

\* 1 In the eighth he expresses his scrupulous fear of simony, and filthy lucre in priests receiving retributions for masses: he who serves the altar is entitled to live by the altar, and may receive a maintenance by the honorary stipends which the Church allows him to receive, on the occasion of certain functions, to which such retributions are annexed, where there is no danger of the people being withdrawn by them from religious duties; for they are never annexed to penance, the holy communion, or the like means of frequent devotion. Yet in such retributions, those incur the guilt of simony, who bargain about them, or receive them in such a manner as to sell the mass, or any other spiritual function. The danger of which abuses, with regard to annuals and trentals for the dead, the holy prelate cuts off by this canon, which Lindwood and others only render obscure by their long disquisitions. In the fifteenth canon he orders the people to be put in mind every Sunday at the parish mass, of the canons against parents whose children are overlaid, by which canons in some cases they were obliged to go into a monastery; in others to do penance for three years; and for~~ever~~even, if drunkenness, or any other sin were the occasion of their overlaying a child. (See Johnson, *ib.* ad an. 1236. t. 2.) In the fifth canon, St. Edmund, addressing himself to all rectors, vicars, and other curates of churches, says: "We admonish, and strictly charge you, that having peace, as far as lies in you, with all men, you exhort your parishioners to be one body in Christ, by the unity of faith, and by the bond of peace; that you compose all differences that arise

Amidst a great corruption of manners, and decay of discipline, his zeal could not fail to raise him adversaries. Even the children of his own mother, the monks of his chapter, and many of his clergy, who ought to have been his comfort and his support, were the first to oppose him, and defeat his holy endeavours, for restoring regularity, the purity of Christian morals, and the true spirit of our divine religion, which its founder came from heaven to plant amongst men. Mr. Johnson says,<sup>1</sup> "Archbishop Edmund was a man of very scrupulous notions." Scrupulosity is a great defect and weakness, often a grievous vice, always contrary to perfect virtue; though a passing state of scrupulosity which is humble, always ready to obey, and attended with unaffected simplicity of heart, is a usual trial of persons when they first begin to serve God in earnest; but this is easily cured. A scrupulosity which arises from constitution, is a severe trial of patience, but that which is founded in self-love and the passions, and is accompanied with wilful obstinacy, is a most dangerous and vicious disorder. But a timorousness of conscience

in your parish, with all diligence, that you make up breaches, reclaim, as far as you can, the litigious, and suffer not the sun to go down upon the anger of any of your parishioners." The prelude to this canon expresses the holy bishop's extreme love of peace as follows: "A great necessity of following peace lies upon us, my sons, since God himself is the author and lover of peace, who came to reconcile not only heavenly, but earthly beings; and eternal peace cannot be obtained without temporal and internal peace." Upon this canon Mr. Johnson has the following remark: "This would be very unreasonably applied to the present English clergy, who rather want friends to persuade the people to be at peace with them upon any terms." (Collect. of English Canons, t. 2.) St. Edmund was author of the book called *Speculum Ecclesiæ*, or *Mirror of the Church*, (t. 13. Bibl. Patr.) of which work some manuscript copies in the Bodleian library, in the English college at Douay, and others, considerably differ, some being abstracts, others a Latin translation made by Will. Beaufu, (a Carmelite friar of Northampton,) from a French translation. Ten devout Latin prayers, a treatise on the seven deadly sins and on the decalogue in French, and another entitled, *The Seven Sacraments briefly declared of Seynt Edmund of Pontenie*, are works of this saint in manuscript, in the Bodleian library, &c. See Tanner, *Biblioth. v. Richie*,

<sup>1</sup> S. Edmund Constit. Can. 8.

differs infinitely from scrupulosity, and is the disposition of all that truly desire to be saved. In this path all the saints walked, with holy Job, fearing all their actions, with constant watchfulness over themselves, and attention to the general rules of the gospel, from which they never suffered custom, example, or the false maxims of the multitude to turn them aside. Upon this principle, Edmund guided himself by the rules of Christ and his Church, and opposed abuses that seemed authorized by custom, and had taken deep root.

There perhaps was never a greater lover of charity and peace than our saint: yet he chose to see his dearest friends break with him, and turn his implacable enemies and persecutors, rather than approve or tolerate the least point which seemed to endanger both his own and their souls. And from their malice, he reaped the invaluable advantage of holy patience. For their bitterness and injustice against him never altered the peace of his mind, or his dispositions of the most sincere charity and tenderness toward them: and he never seemed sensible of any injuries or injustices that were done him. When some told him, that he carried his charity too far, he made answer: "Why should others cause me to offend God, or to lose the charity which I owe and bear them? if any persons were to cut off my arms, or pluck out my eyes, they would be the dearer to me, and would seem the more to deserve my tenderness and compassion." He often used to say, that tribulations were a milk which God prepared for the nourishment of his soul, and that if ever they had any bitterness in them, this was mixed with much sweetness, adding, that they were, as it were, a wild honey, with which his soul had need to be fed in the desert of this world, like John Baptist in the wilderness. He added, that Christ had taught

him by his own example to go to meet and salute his persecutors, and only to answer their injuries by earnestly recommending their souls to his heavenly Father. The more the saint suffered from the world, the greater were the consolations he received from God, and the more eagerly he plunged his heart into the ocean of his boundless sweetness, in heavenly contemplation and prayer. Nicholas Trivet, a learned English Dominican, in his accurate history of the reigns of six kings from Stephen,<sup>1</sup> tells us, that St. Edmund had always some pious and learned Dominican with him wherever he went, and that one of those who lived to be very old, assured him and many others, that the saint was found in a wonderful ecstasy: "One day," says he, "when the saint had invited several persons of great quality to dine with him at his palace, he made them wait a long while before he came out to them. When dinner had been ready some time, St. Richard, who was his chancellor, went to call him, and found him in the chapel, raised a considerable height above the ground, in prayer." St. Edmund, while he was archbishop, kept a decent table for others; but contrived secretly to practise at it himself, the greatest abstemiousness and mortification.

The saint's trials grew every day heavier, and threatened to overwhelm him; yet he was always calm, as the halcyon riding on the waves amidst a violent tempest. King Henry III. being by his bad economy, and the insatiable thirst of his minions, always needy, not content to exact of his subjects, both clergy and laity, exorbitant sums, kept bishoprics, abbeys, and other benefices, a long time vacant, only that, under the title of protecting the goods of the Church, he might appropriate the revenues to his

<sup>1</sup> Annal. 6 Reg. Angl. ad an. 1240.



own use; and when he nominated new incumbents, preferred his own creatures, who were usually strangers or at least persons no ways qualified for such posts. St. Edmund, not bearing an abuse which was a source of infinite disorders, obtained of pope Gregory IX. a bull, by which he was empowered and ordered to fill such vacant benefices, in case the king nominated no one, within six months after they fell vacant. But, upon the king's complaint, his holiness repealed this concession. The zealous prelate, fearing to injure his own conscience, and appear to connive at crying abuses which he was not able to redress, passed secretly into France, thus testifying to the whole world how much he condemned such fatal enormities. Making his way to the court of France, he was graciously received by St. Lewis, all the royal family, and city of Paris, where his virtue was well known. Thence he retired to Pontigny, a Cistercian abbey in Champagne, in the diocese of Auxerre, which had formerly harboured two of his predecessors, St. Thomas, under Henry II., and Stephen Langton, in the late reign of king John. In this retreat the saint gave himself up to fasting and prayer; and preached frequently in the neighbouring churches. His bad state of health obliging him, in compliance to the advice of physicians, to change air, he removed to a convent of regular canons at Soissy or Seysi. Seeing the monks of Pontigny in tears at his departure, he told them he should return to them on the feast of St. Edmund the Martyr; which was verified by his body, after his death, being brought thither on that day. His distemper increasing, he desired to receive the viaticum, and said in presence of the holy sacrament: "In Thee, O Lord, I have believed: Thee I have preached and taught. Thou art my witness, that I have desired nothing on earth but Thee alone. As Thou seest

my heart to desire only Thy holy will, may it be accomplished in me." After receiving the holy sacrament, he continued that whole day in wonderful devotion and spiritual jubilation, so as to seem entirely to forget, and not to feel his distemper: tears of joy and piety never ceased trickling down his cheeks, and the serenity of his countenance discovered the interior contentment of his holy soul. This, his joy, he expressed by alluding to a proverb then in vogue, as follows: "Men say that delight (or sport) goeth into the belly: but I say, it goeth into the heart."<sup>1</sup> This inexpressible interior comfort which his soul enjoyed, wonderfully discovered itself by a cheerfulness and glow which cannot be imagined, but which then appeared in his cheeks, which were before as pale as ashes. The next day he received the holy oils, and from that time always held a crucifix in his hands, kissing and saluting affectionately the precious wounds, particularly that of the side, keeping it long applied to his lips with many tears and sighs, accompanied with wonderful interior cheerfulness and joy to his last breath. From his tender years he had always found incredible sweetness in the name of Jesus, which he had constantly in his heart, and which he repeated most affectionately in his last moments; in his agony he did not lie down but sat in a chair, sometimes leaning upon his hand and sometimes he stood up. At length, fainting away, without any contortions or convulsions he calmly expired, never seeming to interrupt those holy exercises which conducted his happy soul to the company of the blessed, there to continue the same praises, world without end. St. Edmund died at Soissy, near Provins in Champagne,

<sup>1</sup> *Men seizh game God en wombe ac ich segge, game God en herte.*  
Eustachius Monachus, S. Edmundi capellanus et secretarius, inter testimonia de S. Edm. MS.

on the 16th of November 1242, according to Godwin, having been archbishop eight years.

His bowels were buried at Provins; but his body was conveyed to Pontigny, and, after seven days, deposited with great solemnity. Many miraculous cures wrought through his intercession proclaimed his power with God in the kingdom of his glory, and the saint was canonized by Innocent V. in 1246. In 1247, his body was taken up, and found entire, and the joints flexible; it was translated with great pomp, in presence of St. Lewis, queen Blanche, and a number of prelates and noblemen. These precious relics remain to this day the glory of that monastery, which, from our saint, is called St. Edmund's of Pontigny. Dom. Martenne, the learned Maurist monk, tells us, that he saw and examined his body, which is perfectly without the least sign of corruption: the head is seen naked through a crystal glass; the rest of the body is covered with his pontifical garments; the colour of the flesh is every where very white. It is placed above the high altar in a shrine of wood, gilt over. One arm was separated at the desire of St. Lewis, who caused it to be shut in a gold case so as to be seen through crystal glasses. But the flesh of this arm is black, which is ascribed to an embalming when it was taken from the body. English women were allowed to enter this church, though the Cistercian Order forbade the entrance of women into their churches, which now is no where observed among them except in the churches of Citeaux and Clairvaux. In the treasury at Pontigny are shown St. Edmund's pastoral ring, chalice, and paten: also his chasuble, or vestment in which he said mass, which is quite round at the bottom, according to the ancient form of such vestments. Martenne adds, that the conservation of this sacred body free from corruption, is evidently miraculous, and cannot be ascribed to any embalming during above five hundred years, without any change even in the colour. (See *Voy. Litter. de Deux Religieux Bened.* p. 57, 58.) Several miracles, wrought through this saint's intercession, were authentically approved and attested by many English bishops, as Stephen, a subdeacon, who had been six years his secretary assures us, who adds: "Numberless miracles have been performed by his invocation since his deposition, of the truth whereof I am no less certain than if I had seen them with my own eyes." One he mentions that was wrought upon himself. He had suffered an intolerable toothache, with a painful inflammation of his left jaw for two days, without being able to take any rest, till, calling to mind his blessed father Edmund, he with prayers and tears implored his intercession, and quickly fell into a gentle slumber: when he waked he found himself perfectly freed from the toothache, and the swelling entirely dissipated.

St. Edmund was a great proficient in the school of divine love and heavenly contemplation, because he learned perfectly to die to himself. Man's heart is, as it were, naturally full of corruption and poison, and abandoned to many inordinate appetites, and subtle passions which successively exercise their empire over it, artfully disguise themselves, and infect even his virtues.

God often condemns the hearts of those whose actions the world admires; because, having chiefly a regard to the interior dispositions, and the purity and fervour of the intention, he often sees virtues, which shine brightest in the eyes of men, to be false, and no better than disguised vice and self-love. A sincere spirit of humility, meekness, patience, obedience, compunction, and self-denial, with the practice of self-examination, penance, and assiduous prayer, must crucify inordinate self-love, disengage the affections from earthly things, and, purifying the heart, open it to the rays of divine light and grace.

### SAINT EUCHERIUS, BISHOP OF LYONS, C.

NEXT to St. Irenæus, no name has done so great honour to the church of Lyons as that of the great Eucherius. By birth he was most illustrious in the world; and his cousin Valerian had a father and father-in-law possessed of the first dignities in the empire: but the saint, by despising the empty honours and riches of the world, became far more illustrious in the school of Christ. A lofty and penetrating genius, an uncommon stock of learning, and a commanding eloquence, which made him admired by all the orators of his time, were talents which gained him the esteem of all the great men in the empire. In the former part of his life he was married to a lady called Galla, by whom he had two sons, Salonius and Veranus, whom he placed very young in the monastery of Lerins, under the conduct of its holy founder, St. Honoratus, and the tutorship of Salvianus, the eloquent and zealous priest of Marseilles: St. Eucherius lived to see them both raised to the episcopal character. An extraordinary piety had been his distinguishing character from his childhood, from which he