

OCTOBER XIII.

ST. EDWARD, KING AND CONFESSOR.

[From William of Malmesbury (*de Reg. Angl.* 2, c. 13), whom Sir H. Saville calls the best historian of our nation, and who wrote in 1140; Matthew of Westminster, or whoever compiled the *Flores Hist. Angl.* from Matthew Paris, &c.; the life of St. Edward, C., wrote by St. Aëlred, abbot of Rieval. An accurate account of his death is given by Sulcard, a monk of Westminster, in the reign of the Conqueror. See also Ingulphus, published by Gale, Brompton by Twysden, Knyghton, *ibid*; Hoveden and Matt. Paris, ad ann. 1066; Harpsfield, *Sæc.* xi. c. 3; likewise the historians of Normandy, Odericus Vitalis in *Hist. Normann*; Gulielmus Pictav. *de Gestis Gul. Ducis*, &c. The Letter of Innocent II. on the Canoniz. of St. Edward, ann. 1138, ap. *Wilk. Conc. Br.* t. i. p. 419; the bull of Alexander III. *ibid.* p. 434; that of Greg. IX. in 1227; and Rymer's *Fœdera*, t. i. p. 297.]

A.D. 1066.

God often gives bad princes in his wrath, but in a good king he bestoweth a great public blessing on a nation. "A wise king is the upholding of his people." "As the judge of the people is himself, so are his officers; and what manner of man the ruler of the city is, such also are they that dwell therein. An unwise king destroyeth his people; but through the prudence of them that are in authority, the city shall be inhabited."² The happiness of the reign of St. Edward the Confessor is itself a panegyric of his virtue. This prince was son of King Ethelred II.

(1) *Wisd.* vi. 26.(2) *Eccclus.* x. 2, 3.

who left, by Elgiva, his first wife, Edmund Ironside, who was his successor; and, by his second wife, Emma, daughter to Richard I., and sister to Richard II., the third and fourth dukes of Normandy, he had Alfred and Edward.

St. Edward was nursed in the wholesome school of adversity, the mistress of all virtues to those who make a right use of it. The heart of the young prince seemed almost naturally weaned from the world by an early experience of its falsehood, deceitfulness, and miseries. This also led him to seek comfort in the only true channel, which is virtue and the divine love. Though educated in the palace of the Duke of Normandy, he was always an enemy to vanity, pleasure, and pride; so diligently did he fortify his mind against the contagion of a court in which these vices reigned. The arms by which he triumphed over them were, at the same time, the means by which he grounded his heart in the rooted habits of the contrary virtues. From his infancy it was his delight to pray much, to assist as often as possible at the divine sacrifice of the altar, to visit churches and monasteries, and converse with the most holy and perfect among the servants of God. He was modest in his comportment, and sparing in his words; not out of ignorance or slowness of parts, for all historians assure us, that in wisdom and gravity he much surpassed his years; but out of sincere humility, love of recollection, and just apprehension of the snares and dangers of too great forwardness and volubility of speech. His character from his youth was the aggregate of all Christian and moral virtues; but that which particularly distinguished him was an incomparable mildness and sweetness of temper, the fruit of the most sincere humility, and tender universal charity. By this test of genuine virtue, and mark of the spirit of our divine Redeemer, it manifestly appeared how perfectly the saint was dead to himself. Ambition could find no place

in a heart crucified to the world, and to all the false interests of the passions. He had learned in the school of Christ how empty, how false all worldly honours are, how heavy their burden is, and how grievous the charge that attends them. If, where a person has no other aim in them but what is directed to the honour of God, and the utility of others, they may be lawful and holy; it is a certain principle in morality that it is a most fatal and criminal passion for a person to rest in them, or to love them for themselves, or to seek or please himself in them. A man must be grounded in perfect humility, and has need of an extraordinary strength and grace to bear the weight of honour and not suffer his heart to cleave to it. The height of dignity exposes souls to great dangers, as the highest trees are assailed by the greatest storms; so that a much greater virtue is required to command than to obey; and a Christian ought to learn from the example which Christ has set us, that it is often the safest way to endeavour to fly such posts; and that no one ought to receive a place of honour without being well assured that it is the will of God that calls him to it, and without being resolved to live upon that pinnacle always in fear and trembling, by having constantly the weight of his obligations, and the fear of the divine judgments, before his eyes. Those who open a door to any secret ambition in their hearts, are justly abandoned by God, who says of them, "The kings have reigned, but not by me: they have been princes, and I knew it not."¹ St. Edward was called to the crown by the right door, and placed by God on the throne of his ancestors, and had no views but to the advancement of the divine honour, and to the comfort and relief of a distressed people. So far was he from the least spark of ambition, that he declared he would by no means accept the greatest monarchy, if it were to cost the blood of a single man. The very

(1) Oec. viii. 4.

enemies of the royal family rejoiced to see Edward seated on the throne. All were most desirous, after so much tyranny, wars, and bloodshed, to have a saint for king, in whom piety, justice, universal benevolence, and goodness would reign, and direct all public councils. With the incredible joy of the whole kingdom he was anointed and crowned on Easter-day, in 1042, being about forty years old.

Though he ascended the throne in the most difficult times of distraction and commotions, both foreign and domestic, and by his piety and simplicity might seem fitter for a cloister than such a crown, yet never was any reign more happy. The very Danes that were settled in England loved, respected, and feared his name; and to him it was owing that though they had looked upon England as their own, by a pretended right of conquest, and though they were so numerous as to be able to hold the whole nation in the most barbarous subjection for forty years past, and filled the kingdoms of Northumberland, Mercia, and the East-Angles with their colonies; yet they made not the least opposition or disturbance, and from that time were never more mentioned in England. It is certain, from the silence of all our historians, that no massacre was made of them by the English in the reign of St. Edward, as Pontanus, the Danish historian, pretends. Such an attempt could not but have been as dangerous as it would have been barbarous and unjust; and must have made a much greater noise than that which happened under Ethelred II., when their power and numbers were much less. Nor is it to be doubted but, mingling with the English, they became incorporated with them, except some who might, from time to time, return into their own country.

The only war the saint ever undertook was to restore Malcolm, King of Scotland, to which a glorious victory immediately put an end. At home, Earl Godwin, and some other ambitious spirits, complained

he kept several Normans, whom he had brought over with him about his person. But the holy king, with great prudence brought them to reason, or obliged them to leave his dominions for a time, without bloodshed; so that the little clouds which began to gather in his time were immediately scattered without embroiling the state: a sensible proof how formidable the affection of a whole people renders a prince, and how great a happiness it is to a nation, when a king, who is truly the father of his subjects, reigns in their hearts. The example of St. Edward's virtues had a powerful influence over many that were about his person, in teaching them to curb their passions. It is frequently the ambition of sovereigns which awakens that of their subjects; and a love of riches sharpens a violent love of vanity and luxury, and produces pride; which passions break forth in various vices, which weaken, undermine, and destroy a state. No prince ever gave stronger or more constant proofs than St. Edward of a heart entirely free from that canker. He seemed to have no other desire than to see his people happy, and to ease their burdens; and no prince seems ever to have surpassed him in his compassion for the necessities of others. Having no inordinate passions to feed, he knew no other use of money than to answer the obligations of justice, to recompense the services of those that deserved well of the state, and to extend his liberality to monasteries and churches, and, above all, to the poor. He delighted much in religious foundations, by which the divine service and praises might be perpetuated on earth to the end of time; but he would never think of plundering his people to raise these public structures, or to satisfy his profuse alms. His own royal patrimony sufficed for all. At that time kings had their estates; taxes were not raised except in time of war, or on other extraordinary emergencies. St. Edward never found himself under any necessity of having

recourse to such burdensome methods. He remitted the Danegelt, which in his father's time had been paid to the Danish fleet, and had been ever after paid into the royal exchequer. On a certain occasion, the lords of the kingdom understanding that the king's exchequer had been exhausted by his excessive alms, raised upon their vassals a large sum, unknown to him, and one Christmas begged his majesty to accept that free present of his grateful subjects to clothe his soldiers, and defray other public expenses. St. Edward, surprised to see such a heap of money gathered into his exchequer, returned his thanks to his affectionate subjects, but expressed a great abhorrence of what he called a pilaging of the poor, and commanded that it should be returned, every farthing, to those that had given it. His great alms and actions of pious liberality showed what the sole retrenching of luxury and superfluity may do. His whole deportment showed how much he was master of himself. He was never morose, never appeared transported with anger, puffed up with vanity, or fond of pleasure. His conversation was agreeable, and accompanied with a certain majesty, and he delighted much to speak of God and spiritual things.

St. Edward had conceived from his youth the greatest esteem and love for the precious treasure of purity, and preserved this virtue both in mind and body without stain. St. Aëlred testifies that, in his youth, through the warmth of his constitution, the subtile artifices of the devil, and the liberties of a court in which he lived a stranger, he sustained violent assaults; but resisted this enemy so manfully, that in all his battles he was gloriously triumphant. Humility, a life of prayer and mortification, a diligent flight of all dangerous occasions, and the practice of all manner of good works were the weapons by which he diligently armed himself against these temptations. Bearing always in mind that "a man's enemies are those of his own household," he chas-

tised his body by an abstemious life in the midst of dainties; for to pamper it on such occasions is as if, when a house is on fire, a man should throw dry wood on the flames. He watched all the avenues of his soul, keeping his eyes and his other senses under the strictest restraint, and a habitual government, that they should never steal any unguarded glances or other dangerous liberties; and he shunned all superfluous converse with persons of the other sex, from which at least the secret corners of the heart contract something which impairs that perfection of purity, by which the affections are entirely shut up against all creatures, and rendered fit to invite the embraces of the heavenly spouse. His triumph seemed, by rooted victorious habits both of purity and of humility, and those other virtues by which it is preserved, to be become easy and secure, when, being placed on the throne, he was entreated both by his nobility and people to take a royal consort. Earl Godwin, whose immoderate power and wealth seemed to raise him above the level of his fellow subjects, moved every engine to make the choice fall upon his daughter Edgitha, a lady totally unlike her father, being most remarkably virtuous and abstemious; for beauty, understanding, and all accomplishments, she was the miracle of her sex. Edward seeing that reading, studying, and devotion were her whole delight, hoped she would be easily engaged to become his wife upon condition always to live in holy virginity, in imitation of the mother of God and St. Joseph; it not being in his power otherwise to marry, he having long ago consecrated himself to God by a vow of perpetual chastity, as St. Aëlred assures us. The good king earnestly recommended the matter to God, joining much fasting and almsdeeds to devout prayer, before he disclosed his purpose to the virgin. She readily assented to his religious desire, so that, being joined together in holy wedlock, they always lived as brother and

sister, and their example was afterwards imitated by St. Henry and St. Elzear.

Many actions of kings, in public trials and certain affairs of state, are rather the actions of their council than their own. This is sometimes necessary that no room be left to suspect that scandalous public crimes are by an unjust connivance passed over with impunity, or that any essential part of the duties and protection which a prince owes his people, is neglected. This accounts, in some measure, for the good king's behaviour towards his mother, in the famous trial which she underwent. The fact is related by Brompton,¹ Knyghton,² Harpsfield, and others, though no mention is made of it by Ingulphus or any others who lived nearest the time. Certain wicked men who desired to engross alone the confidence of the king, and the entire administration of the government, set their wits to work to invent some wicked plot for ruining the queen-mother in the opinion of the king. Queen Emma often saw Alwin, the pious Bishop of Winchester, by whose advice she governed her conscience. She was therefore accused of having had criminal conversation with him. Her chastity must have been very perfect and very wary, that calumny itself could find no other but so holy a man to fasten upon. Robert, Archbishop of Canterbury, formerly abbot of Jumiege, whom Edward had brought over with him from Normandy, was drawn into a persuasion of her guilt. Her enemies loaded her, moreover, with invectives and accusations for having consented, not only to marry Canute, the enemy of her former husband's family, but also to have favoured Hardicanute, to the prejudice of the right of her children by her first husband, and of the whole Saxon line, to whose exclusion from all share in the kingdom she consented in the articles of this second marriage, agreeing that the crown of all England should be settled on her issue

by Canute; though Canute himself altered this settlement by will, so far as to leave only Denmark to Hardicanute, and England to Harold, whom he had by a former wife or concubine; for he looked upon his possession of England as founded in the right of conquest. But Canute's possession, especially of West-Sex (under which name was then comprised also Sussex and whatever lying on the south side of the Thames was, by Canute's partition, left to the English-Saxons), was an unjust usurpation; and, for Emma voluntarily to concur to the exclusion of the rightful heirs, was an inexcusable and unnatural step, for which only her repentance could atone. To this charge, however, Edward seemed altogether insensible; and perhaps never was any man more remarkably so, even toward strangers, with regard to private or personal injuries. The accusation of sacrilege and incontinency disturbed him, and filled him with horror and grief beyond measure, being, on the one side, unwilling to believe so atrocious a crime, and, on the other, afraid at conniving at such a scandal. He therefore suffered the bishops to take cognizance of the cause in an assembly which they held at Winchester; and, in the mean time, the bishop was confined in that city, and Emma in the royal nunnery of Warewell, in Hampshire. In the synod several bishops wished, to the king's great satisfaction, that the cause might be dropped; but the Archbishop of Canterbury insisted so warmly on the enormity of the scandal, and the necessity and obligation of penance and a public reparation, that the synod was worked up to the severest resolutions. The injured queen could only have recourse to God, like another Susanna, against the malice of her perjured accusers, and, in proof of her innocence, trusting in him who is the protector of the oppressed, offered herself to the trial of ordeal. Accordingly, after the night had been spent in imploring the divine protection through the intercession

(1) Chron. inter 10 Scriptor.

(2) De Eventibus Anglie, ibid. t. ii. p. 2329.

of St. Swithin, Queen Emma walked blindfold and barefoot over nine red-hot ploughshares, laid in St. Swithin's Church, in Winchester, without receiving the least hurt, so that when she was gone over them she asked how far she was from her purgation. Upon which her eyes were uncovered, and looking behind her upon the ploughshares which she had passed over, she burst into praises of God for her wonderful deliverance.¹ The king, who, anxious for the event, had not ceased all this while earnestly to recommend it to God, seeing this testimony of heaven in favour of the innocence of his dear mother, full of gratitude to her deliverer, cast himself at her feet, begged pardon for his fault of credulity, and in satisfaction received the discipline from two bishops who were present. In acknowledgment for this miraculous favour he bestowed on the Church of St. Swithin, at Winchester, the isle of Portland and three manors; Queen Emma gave to it nine manors, and Bishop Alwin nine others, according to the number of ploughshares, which were kept as a memorial in that monastery. The Archbishop Robert returned to Normandy, and retired to his monastery of Jumiege, after having first, in penance, performed a pilgrimage to St. Peter's tomb at Rome. The king commanded all his mother's goods and estates which had been seized to be restored to her. She afterwards died at Winchester, in 1052.

The following year was remarkable for the death of Earl Godwin, who fell down dead whilst he was at supper with the king at Winchester,² or, according to Brompton, at Windsor, in 1053. Ralph of Disse, Brompton, and others say, that thinking the king still harboured a suspicion of his having been the contriver of his brother Alfred's death, he wished that if he was guilty he might never swallow a morsel of meat which he was putting into

(1) Brompton, Knyghton, Tho. Rudborne, &c. See Harpsfield, Parker, in vit. Roberti archiep. Alford ad ann. 1047.

(2) Ralph of Disse, in Chron. p. 476, &c.

his mouth; and that he was choked with it. This circumstance, however, is not mentioned by Ingulf, who wrote soon after. Harold succeeded his father Godwin in the earldom of Kent, and in his other dignities. Griffith, Prince of South Wales, having made inroads into Herefordshire, the king ordered Harold to curb him, which he executed. This Griffith some years after was taken prisoner, and put to death by Griffith-ap-Shewelyn, King or Prince of North Wales, who sent his head to Harold, and presents to King Edward, who was so generous as to bestow the kingdom of the former, which his troops had conquered, on the late prince's two brothers, Blechgent and Rithwalag, who swore allegiance to Edward. In 1058 the king suffered a great loss by the death of the pious and most valiant Earl Siward. So great was this soldier's passion for arms that in his agony he regretted as a misfortune his dying on his bed, and calling for his armour, expired as soon as he had it on. The death of Siward was followed by that of Leofric, who was the most prudent and religious counsellor of St. Edward, being for his wisdom, the Nestor of his age, and by his piety a perfect model of Christian perfection. His immense charities to the poor, the great number of churches which he repaired or built, and the great monastery which he founded at Coventry, were public monuments of his zeal and beneficence, which virtues were proved genuine by his sincere humility and devotion. The exemptions and privileges which his pious and charitable lady, Godiva, obtained of him for the city of Coventry, have commended their memory to the latest posterity in those parts. In the pious and wise counsels of this great man, St. Edward, who most frequently resided at Islip, found his greatest comfort and support. His son Alfgar was made Duke of Mercia, but fell short of his father's reputation.

The laws framed by St. Edward were

the fruit of his wisdom, and that of his counsellors. They are still in force as part of the common law of England, unless in things altered by later statutes: they consisted in short positive precepts, in which judges kept close to the words of the law, being not reasoned away either by the judges or advocates, says Mr. Gurdon. In them punishments were very mild; scarce any crimes were capital, and amercements and fines were certain, determined by the laws, not inflicted at the will and pleasure of the judges. The public peace and tranquillity were maintained, and every one's private property secured; not by the rigour of the laws, but by the severity and diligence with which they were executed, and justice administered. Whence Mr. Gurdon says,¹ "This king's religious and just administration was as much or more valued by the people than the text of the laws." It is the remark of the same ingenious author in another place,² "Edward the Confessor, that great and good legislator, reigned in the hearts of his people. The love, harmony, and good agreement between him and the great council of the nation, produced such a happiness as to be the measure of the people's desires in all succeeding reigns; the law and government of King Edward being petitioned for, and strenuously contended for, by the English and Norman barons." The saint's historians relate, as an instance of his extreme lenity and goodness, that as he seemed one day asleep in his chamber, he saw a servant boy come twice and steal a considerable quantity of money out of a great sum which Hugoline, the keeper of his privy purse, had left exposed; and that when the boy came a third time, he only bade him take care, for Hugoline was coming, who, if he caught him, would have him severely whipped, and he would lose his booty. When Hugoline came in and burst into a rage for the loss, the

king bade him be easy, for the person who had taken the money wanted it more than they did. Some moderns censure this action. But we must observe that the king doubtless took all care that the thief should be made sensible of his sin, and did not imagine he would return to the theft; also that he regarded it merely as a personal injury which he was always ready to forgive; and that this single private instance of such a pardon was not imprudent, or would have any influence on the administration of public justice. Saints are always inclined to pardon personal injuries; and in these cases easily persuade themselves that lenity may be used without offending against prudence. No prince seems to have understood better than St. Edward what he owed to the protection of his people, to the laws, and to public justice; in administering which he walked in the steps of the great King Alfred, and proposed to himself as a model his severity in inspecting into the conduct of his judges. William the Bastard, Duke of Normandy, came into England, to pay a visit to the king his cousin in 1052, the year before Godwin's death.

St. Edward during his exile in Normandy had made a vow to perform a pilgrimage to St. Peter's tomb at Rome, if God should be pleased ever to put an end to the misfortunes of his family. When he was settled on the throne he began to prepare suitable gifts and offerings to make to the altar of the apostle, and to put things in order for his journey. For this purpose he held a great council, in which he declared his vow, and the obligation he lay under of returning thanks, in the best manner he was able, to the divine clemency, propounded the best methods to be taken for securing commerce and the public peace, and affectionately commended all his dear subjects to the divine mercy and protection. The whole assembly of the governors and chief men of the provinces made strong expos-

(1) History of the Parliament, t. i. p. 47.

(2) Ibid. p. 37.

tulations against his design. They commended his devotion, but with tears represented to him that the kingdom would be left exposed to domestic divisions and to foreign enemies; and had already before their eyes slaughters, civil wars, armies of fierce Danes, and every other calamity. The king was moved by their entreaties and reasons, and consented that the matter should be referred to Leo IX., who then sat in St. Peter's chair. Aëlred, Archbishop of York, and Herman, Bishop of Winchester, with two abbots, were dispatched to Rome on this errand. The pope, considering the impossibility of the king's leaving his dominions exposed to such grievous dangers and calamities, dispensed with his vow upon condition that, by way of commutation, he should give to the poor the sum he would have expended in his journey, and should moreover build or repair and endow a monastery in honour of St. Peter. King Edward having received this brief, after due deliberation, pitched upon a spot where to erect this royal abbey. Sebert, King of the East-Angles, nephew to St. Ethelbert, upon his conversion, founded the Cathedral of St. Paul's in London, and also, according to Sulcard, without the walls on the west of that city a monastery in honour of St. Peter, called Thorney, where a temple of Apollo is said to have stood in the time of the Romans, and to have been thrown down by an earthquake. St. Edward, invited by the situation and other circumstances, repaired and endowed the same in a most magnificent manner out of his own patrimony, and obtained of Pope Nicholas II. the most ample exemptions and privileges for it dated in 1059. From its situation it was called Westminster, and is famous for the coronation of our kings, and the burial of great persons, and was at the dissolution the richest abbey in England. William of Malmesbury,¹ St. Aëlred, Brompton, and others, relate that St. Edward, while he resided in a palace

near this church, cured an Irishman named Gillemichel, who was entirely a cripple, and was covered with running sores. The king carried him on his back and set him down sound, though Sulcard takes no notice of this miracle.* The same historians mention that a certain woman had a swelling in her neck under her chin full of corruption and exhaling a noisome smell. Being admonished in a dream, she addressed herself to the king for his blessing. St. Edward washed the ulcerous sore and blessed it with the sign of the cross; after which the sore burst and cleansed itself, and the patient was healed. Malmesbury adds, that it was the constant report of such as well knew the life of Edward, that he had healed many of the same disease whilst he lived in Normandy. Hence was derived the custom of our kings touching for the cure of that species of scrofulous tumour called the king's-evil.

King Edward resided sometimes at Winchester, sometimes at Windsor, or at London; but most ordinarily at Islip, in Oxfordshire, where he was born. Formerly, noblemen lived on their estates amidst their tenants and vassals, and only repaired to court on certain great festivals, or when called by the king upon extraordinary occasions. Christmas being one of the chief feasts on which the nobility waited on the king, St. Edward, when the buildings were finished, chose that solemnity for the dedication of the new church at Westminster. The ceremony was performed with great devotion and the utmost pomp, the bishop and nobility of the whole kingdom assisting thereat, as Sulcard testifies. The king signed the charter of the foundation, and of the immunities and privileges granted to this church, to which were annexed the most dreadful spiritual comminations against those who should ever presume to infringe the same. Next to the prince of the apostles, this holy king had a singular devotion to St. John Evangelist, the great

(1) *Lib. ii. de Reg. c. 13.*

model of holy purity and divine charity; and it is related in his life, that he was forewarned by that glorious Evangelist of his approaching dissolution, in recompense of his religious devotion, in never refusing any just and reasonable request that was made him for the sake, or in the name of that saint. The pious king, by his munificent foundation, hoped to erect a standing monument of his zeal for the divine honour, and of his devotion to the holy apostle St. Peter, and to establish a seminary of terrestrial angels, by whom a perpetual holocaust of divine praise and love might be paid to God with chaste affections disengaged from the world and all earthly things, for all succeeding ages, when he should be no longer on earth to praise God here himself; also by the fervour of many pious servants of God he desired to supply the defects and imperfection of his own devotion in the divine love and service. At the same time he renewed, with the utmost fervour, the entire oblation which he had never failed all his life continually to make of his heart, and of all that he had or was, to the divine glory, begging he might be made, through the divine mercy, an eternal sacrifice of love. In these dispositions, he sung with holy Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." Being taken ill before the ceremony of the dedication was over, he hastened the same, and continued to assist at it to the end. He then betook himself to his bed, and by the most perfect exercises of devotion and the sacraments of the church, prepared himself for his passage to eternity. In his last moments, seeing his nobles all bathed in tears round his bed, and his affectionate and virtuous queen sobbing more vehemently and weeping more bitterly than the rest, he said to her with great tenderness, "Weep not, my dear daughter; I shall not die, but shall live. Departing from the land of the dying, I hope to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living."¹

(1) Brompton in Chronic. p. 950.

Commending her to her brother Harold, and certain other lords, he declared he left her an untouched virgin. He calmly expired on the 5th of January, in 1066, having reigned twenty-three years, six months, and twenty-seven days, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. Never was king more sincerely or more justly regretted by his subjects; and to see the happiness of the good Confessor's reign revived, was the constant and the highest object of all the temporal wishes of their posterity for many succeeding ages. In 1102, the body of St. Edward was found entire, the limbs flexible, and the cloths fresh. Soon after, a certain Norman, whose name was Ralph, and who was an entire cripple, recovered the use of his limbs by praying at his tomb, and six blind men were restored in like manner to their sight; which miracles, with some others, being duly proved, the saint was canonized by Alexander III., in 1161, and his festival began to be kept on the 5th of January. Two years after, a solemn translation of his body (which was found incorrupt, and in the same condition as formerly) was performed by St. Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, in presence of King Henry II. and many persons of distinction, on the 13th of October; on which day his principal festival is now kept. The national council of Oxford, 1222, commanded his feast to be kept in England a holyday. Out of respect to the memory of St. Edward, the kings of England to this day, at their coronation, receive his crown, and put on his dalmatic and maniple, as part of the royal robes, though even the crown has been since changed, and now only bears St. Edward's name, being made in imitation of his.

St. Edward was a saint in the midst of a court, and in a degenerate age. Such an example must convince us, that for any to impute their want of a Christian spirit and virtue to the circumstances of their state or situation, is a false and foolish

pretence ; a proof of which is, that if these were changed they would still remain the same persons. The fault lies altogether in their own sloth and passions. One who is truly in earnest makes dangers and difficulties a motive of greater vigilance, application, and fervour, and even converts them into the means of his greater sanctification. Temperance and mortification may be practised, the spirit of true devotion acquired, and all virtues exercised by the divine grace, even in an heroic degree, where a desire and resolution does not fall short. From obstacles and contradictions themselves the greatest advantages may be reaped ; by them patience, meekness, humility, and charity are perfected, and the soul is continually awaked and quickened into a lively sense of her duty to God.
